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ABSTRACT

This monograph details several of the factors which brought about the publication, in 1947, of "A Free and Responsible Press," the report of the Hutchins Commission on Freedom of the Press. The commission's report gave the press a face-saving way of responding to the criticism which was leveled at the economic structure of newspaper operations and reinforced the overall theme of press "responsibility." Chapters include discussions of the environment of crisis in which the press existed prior to the formation of the commission, of the creation and workings of the commission, and of public and press reaction to the issuance of the report. It is concluded that the notion of a free, but responsible, press was an idea whose time had come. (KS)

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MARGARET A. BLANCHARD

The Hutchins Commission, The Press and the Responsibility Concept

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MARGARET A. BLANCHARD is an instructor in the School of Journalism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A former Florida newspaper reporter, she received her B.S.J. and M.A. degrees from the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida. She is currently a doctoral student in American history at the University of North Carolina. She expresses her thanks to Dr. J. Carlyle Sitterson, Kenan professor of history, for his advice in the initial stages of this project and to Dr. John E. Semonche, professor of history, for his invaluable assistance in its completion. She also wishes to thank the School of Journalism at the University of North Carolina for its financial help in the researching of this paper and to express her gratitude to Dr. Donald L. Shaw, professor of journalism, and Dr. Richard R. Cole, associate professor of journalism, for their advice and encouragement.

Contents

Introduction 1

Prelude: A Press in Crisis 3

The Commission Appears 11

The Commission at Work 18

The Report is Issued 24

Press Reaction 29

Conclusions 51

Introduction

THIRTY YEARS after the publication of *A Free and Responsible Press*, the summary report of the Hutchins Commission on Freedom of the Press, the words within that slim volume find themselves repeated and sometimes even revered as having been wise beyond the time of their writing. After all, many changes in press operations visible today were foreshadowed in that document of a generation ago. That it took almost 30 years to put some of the Hutchins Commission recommendations into practice is often said to be the fault of the press leaders of that earlier time: a group of stubborn, arrogant men who allowed *A Free and Responsible Press* to languish unread while they heaped coals of fire upon the heads of those so audacious as to suggest that there were problems within the newspaper industry.

Support for that interpretation of press response to the Hutchins Commission abounds in the literature of the 1960s and early 1970s. Hutchins became "a swear word in most newspaper offices,"[1] one writer tells us. The report was "harshly received,"[2] says another. From yet another source comes the notion that newspapers were so proud of the role they had played in World War II that they felt they deserved "something better" than a "heavily biased view of their accomplishments and shortcomings."[3]

If books of an earlier time are dusted off, however, a slightly different view of press response is found. Recognizing the sensitivity of newspapers to criticism, Frank Luther Mott took the view that "newspapers . . . in many cases, welcomed the commission's analysis and recommendations, though with reservations . . ."[4] From another book of the 1950s comes the idea that the press was hostile to the Commission, but that it did not direct its criticisms at the "primary assumptions of the report. Evidently few if any of the media took issue with the Commission on the fundamental point that the press has a social responsibility . . . or even on the function of the press in contemporary democratic society."[5]

Are either of these interpretations of press response to the Hutchins Commission report valid? Or is yet another interpretation possible, one which says that developments in the area of press responsibility apparent today did not occur overnight, that some groundwork for these developments was laid with the Hutchins report? Only when the Commission on Freedom of the Press is placed within its broad social, economic and political context can any reliable judgment on this question be made.

A look around the world of the 1930s and 1940s would show that newspapers in many countries were under direct or indirect government control and were used as propaganda instruments rather than news vehicles. In the United States, a virulent press criticism, dating at least to the turn of the century, was still assaulting the economic structure of newspaper operations. And in the area of American press-government relations, a domestic war between leaders of the institutional press and Franklin Roosevelt had produced a series of federal prosecutions of various press agencies and had resulted in bringing much of the business side of press operations under governmental regulation by way of Supreme Court decisions.

Faced with the coalescence of these factors, the March 27, 1947, publication of *A Free and Responsible Press* gave the press a face-saving way to meet some of the criticism sent its way. Although many press leaders found fault with the Commission and its report, the overall theme of increased press "responsibility" was hard to avoid. Acceptance of the vague concept symbolized by that word was forthcoming, although sometimes grudgingly. The ruggedly individualistic heritage of the press which revered total independence and complete freedom of operation for each newspaper and newspaperman would not allow immediate and full adherence to the Commission report, but the exigencies of the times demanded partial capitulation: to a press which needed to rebuild its public image and revive its credibility, the concept of press "responsibility" was an idea whose time had come.

Prelude: A Press in Crisis

WHEN THE Hutchins Commission was announced in 1944, some members of the professional community welcomed its inquiry as a way to upgrade a declining public image and to increase public understanding of the importance of freedom of the press. Among those seeing such a role for the Commission was *Editor & Publisher (E&P)*. Using familiar rhetoric, *E&P* commented: "Our ideas on the freedoms guaranteed under the First Amendment should be considerably clarified during the next couple of years, especially with respect to freedom of the press." It saw the research project in terms of "public interest in this vital topic" because of concern about possible government failure to relinquish powers acquired during the war. The editorial added: "*Editor & Publisher* believes that the vigilance necessary to preserve the First Amendment as the keystone of all democratic freedoms" should be promoted by efforts like that of the Hutchins Commission.[6]

The press had reason to welcome the Hutchins inquiry. By 1944, the nation's newspapers had been through a dozen years of institutional nightmare. The prime reason for this trauma was the interpretation of the First Amendment emerging through Supreme Court decisions in the years since its first ruling on the free press portion of the First Amendment in 1931.[7] Prior to that time, the newspaper industry had construed the constitutional proviso for itself. In the absence of determinations to the contrary, the press defined the First Amendment almost solely in terms of absence of prior restraint over publication. The press saw itself as free to operate without interference in gathering and presenting news and, as many editors and publishers assumed, in functioning as a business. The cliché used to substantiate this claim was the obvious one: the press was the only industry named specifically in the

Constitution and such mention meant that the government could not interfere in any aspect of press operation.

Litigation involving newspapers increased during the Depression years, however, and through these tests, a court-authored definition of the First Amendment began to emerge. Freedom of the press was being defined as a right of the people to obtain information necessary for survival in a rapidly changing world, not as a right of publishers to operate without consideration of people's needs. As the Supreme Court expanded such a view, legislation which tangentially affected newspapers began making its way through Congress. The previously unregulated financial underpinnings of the newspaper business viewed as necessary for a truly free and independent press by many publishers and editors, were considered threatened by a variety of these measures including, for instance, wage and hours legislation. To newspaper owners, men who had personal and family fortunes tied up in their businesses, the very foundations of the universe seemed threatened. The press in seeking to protect its proprietary rights as well as its rights to dispense information found itself locked in combat with the federal government. To some of the newspaper leaders involved, the ongoing battle was indicative of an administration using its arsenal of laws and lawyers solely to quiet an industry which would not agree with its plans for social and economic reform.[8]

Although this changing press-government relationship served as the backdrop for these battles and was argued forcefully in legislatures, convention halls and courtrooms, the philosophical problem was not publicly detailed in reporting events of the time. Freedom of the press became a slogan for many newspaper leaders and became identical with the notion of no government interference of any sort in press operations. This argument was extended by some to mean that any Roosevelt Administration plan which would cost newspapers money, including the Social Security Act, could be added to the list of dangers to freedom of the press. The need to protect proprietary rights in the press and to give newspapers a sound financial base upon which to operate was transformed into a vendetta against one of the most popular presidents in American history. The stakes were high: would Franklin Roosevelt succeed in his efforts to bring the press under regulations which affected

every other industry in the nation, or would the press maintain its total independence from government control?

In 1932, 45 percent of the newspapers endorsed Franklin Roosevelt whereas 57 percent of the people voted for him. As Roosevelt developed plans for economic recovery, his personal popularity with the people grew and the dangers inherent in a public confrontation with him became greater. The initial confrontation between press and President came over the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) in 1933-34. The NIRA required businesses to draft cooperative agreements designed to increase employment, shorten hours, raise wages and stabilize profits. To the newspaper industry, the NIRA presented a mixed bag of problems: increasing wages and decreasing hours could put smaller newspapers out of business and would definitely cost others money; limiting child labor could mean that newspaper carrier boys would have to be replaced; and requiring collective bargaining would be a bitter pill for publishers with strong anti-union sentiments. But the rhetoric centered on Section 4 (b) of the NIRA, which authorized the President to license businesses, if he deemed it necessary, to facilitate recovery. To publishers and editors, such a provision summoned memories of earlier attacks on the press such as the Stationers Company, the Star Chamber, the Stamp Act, John Peter Zenger and the Alien and Sedition Acts.

The American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA) was given the responsibility by other industry organizations to handle newspaper code negotiations. Howard Davis, ANPA president and business manager of the New York *Herald Tribune*, became the official spokesman for the group during months of discussions. In the background was Colonel Robert R. McCormick, chairman of the ANPA Freedom of the Press Committee and a long-time advocate of "freedom of the press" in the sense of both freedom from governmental interference and freedom to criticize the government. The initial ANPA code submission protected constitutional rights, eliminated reporters from wage and hour provisions, kept newspaper carrier boys on the job and maintained an open shop. Prolonged and difficult negotiations ensued; finally in February, 1934, the President had a newspaper code before him which gave in to administration demands on reporters' classifications, child labor and open shop provisions but demanded a clause

recommitting the President to uphold the First Amendment. Roosevelt, looking back over the tactics of the publishers' negotiating committee during the past months and deeming them obstructionist, emotionally lashed out at the free-press clause, terming it "pure surplusage." Although the President was forced to back down and to recognize the validity of the inclusion of the free-press clause, many editors and publishers felt that he had displayed his true colors in his initial response. A frontal attack on the First Amendment seemed imminent.

Perhaps as a result of this fear of possible oppression, the ANPA became involved in an intensive lobbying campaign designed to scuttle New Deal reform measures. Outward justification for an effort that joined the ANPA in common cause with the National Association of Manufacturers and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce was that various reform proposals would adversely affect freedom of the press. ANPA lobbyists found freedom of the press issues in the Federal Securities Exchange Act, the Social Security Act, the Wagner Labor Relations Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Wheeler-Lea Bill giving the Federal Trade Commission the right to regulate advertising, the Copeland Pure Food, Drug and Cosmetics Bill and various pieces of child labor legislation.[9] The public, however, did not perceive a threat to the freedom of the press in Roosevelt's social welfare proposals. Consequently, the press's legislative efforts suggested to A. M. Lee "a convenient manner in which to stop reform legislation: Make it applicable, at least in part, to the daily newspaper industry."[10] And it left the impression "that newspaper publishers were crying 'freedom of the press' because they didn't want to make reasonable adjustments to new socio-economic conditions."[11]

What was happening was that the secure world of laissez faire economic principles was giving way under the weight of the Depression. With public indignation against industry after industry becoming more apparent, the question soon became whether the First Amendment could be interpreted in a way to hold back the forces of rampant social and economic unrest. The judiciary became the battlefield on which the strength of the First Amendment would be tested and, although cases involving the informational side of the newspaper enterprise were making their way through the courts, the litigation which seemed to unsettle news-

paper leaders the most involved the business side of press operations. In those cases, a new slant was being given to the First Amendment, one which cut into the freedom of operation which newspaper publishers had long felt they had possessed.

For the first time, newspapers found themselves declared part of interstate commerce and subject to at least some government supervision. In the leading case, *Associated Press v. National Labor Relations Board* (1937), a 5-4 Supreme court decision said: "The business of the Associated Press is not immune from regulation because it is an agency of the press. The publisher of a newspaper has no special immunity from the application of general laws."[12] The decision not only breached a supposedly secure defensive line, but it was particularly galling in requiring recognition of the American Newspaper Guild, a legacy of the NIRA. Newspapers were told that an employee's union activity was not considered a justifiable reason for his firing—even if the employer was a newspaper or news agency and the employee a reporter. How far the court would allow New Deal legislation to penetrate into this part of newspaper operations was unknown. This was one of the early decisions coming down on the side of New Deal social legislation after the introduction of the President's court-packing plan in February, 1937, and before the court-packing plan died in July, 1937. By the summer of 1937, there was already one vacancy on the High Bench; that seat went to Hugo Black, an antagonist of Colonel McCormick,[13] in August. As the ascendancy of Roosevelt appointees to the Supreme Court became certain, newspaper publishers and editors found it necessary to speculate on just how freedom of the press would fare in the future.

Although this change in the range of First Amendment protections afforded the press was unwelcome, the principles included in it were not unknown. The idea that Congress, the courts or the public itself might meet the press in combat over differing social values had long been a theme of press criticism. Twentieth century critics found their ideological roots in the progressive era and their early spokesmen from among the muckrakers, but their topic was timeless: growing financial concentration in media ownership, the effect that concentration had on newspaper content and the need for changes within the newspaper's business operations. Such changes, wrote the press critics, would either come voluntarily

from within the newspaper industry or be forced from without. Will Irwin warned publishers in 1911 that the right to print is "a tacit franchise; and that the payment expected by the American public for this franchise is leadership by means of light."[14] Failure here could lead to demands for legal action against newspapers, for "law is the last resort of society, the ultimate social corrective when all others have failed."[15] In 1920, Walter Lippmann, still basically a progressive politically and still bitten by the reform urge, told the economically exclusive world of the publisher: "If publishers . . . do not face the facts and attempt to deal with them, some day Congress, in a fit of temper, egged on by an outraged public opinion, will operate on the press with an ax."[16]

This supposed cleavage between interests of society and interests of newspaper owners was exploited further by press critics of the late 1930s and early 1940s. Almost with one voice, they labeled the press a representative of established commercial interests and of the upper socio-economic class, out of step with the general population's wishes for society while reflecting the biases of its owners in its presentation of the news. Ferdinand Lundberg, a veteran of the Chicago police beats and later the New York *Herald Tribune's* Wall Street reporter, wrote in 1937 that under "the press of the individual commercial and industrial entrepreneur," press freedom meant "the 'natural right' to criticize and even libel government in serving its own class interests."[17] In hitting at the American Newspaper Publishers Association, former Chicago *Tribune* foreign correspondent George Seldes charged, "Nothing is sacred to the American press but itself."[18] And President Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior, Harold L. Ickes, warned, "A free and enlightened society cannot enjoy the dangerous luxury of a press that is eager for privileges for itself . . . while at the same time it is indifferent to its obligations."[19] Even Oswald Garrison Villard, former editor of the *Nation*, in a book sympathetic to the press of the 1940s, found himself writing: "Just as the profession of journalism has changed into a business, so there is every temptation for the proprietors to consider all political and economic questions from the point of view of those who have very large economic stakes and to look with alarm upon all proposed social and political reforms."[20]

Many press critics edged ever closer to suggesting some form of governmental intervention in newspaper operations if the papers did not abandon their class biases and become more representative of the nation as a whole. Concepts such as mandatory retraction and/or right-to-reply laws drew applause from many. Some seemed intrigued when Senator (later Supreme Court Justice) Sherman Minton, D-Ind., suggested a law making it a felony to knowingly print an untruth.[21] Most of the press critics, no matter how bitter they were, however, could not take that final step and recommend governmental intervention in press operations. Said Secretary Ickes: "We cannot control the press without losing our essential liberties. . . ."[22] Just how the government would or could intervene and to what extent was imponderable to the press' critics of the time, who preferred to warn of the necessity of press reform in the hope that such reform would come from within.

Against each of these alleged attacks on freedom of the press, editors and publishers protested loudly. *E & P* tended to dismiss such outpourings of criticism as the ramblings of fools and idiots preaching the Lundberg-Seldes-Ickes party line. But there must have been a nagging doubt about the state of newspaper credibility, especially after the editorial leadership of the press was trounced as badly as Alf Landon was in the 1936 election.[23] Many contemporary observers were inclined to believe that the press had lost its influence with the public and could never be trusted again. How true was this conclusion?

If the press leadership acknowledged a declining public image, a loss of credibility, it often was blamed on "that man in the White House." Although much of the obloquy directed at Franklin Roosevelt came from newspapers of Republican persuasion, other newspapers joined in attributing their problems to the President. To these latter editors and publishers, anti-FDR sentiment was spawned by the emotionalism of the times and encouraged by the ability of some newspaper leaders to capitalize on those fears. But even in the late 1930s, there were some voices within the profession—such as that of William Allen White, president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) in 1939—who refused to blame the profession's problems on someone else and called on the newspaper business to put its own house in order.

Although newspaper owners must have felt overwhelmed by threats to their proprietary interests, the Supreme Court was handing down a series of decisions which broadened public access to information. In 1936, the court struck down Huey Long's attempt to tax newspapers which disagreed with him, ruling that special taxation which had as its goal the limiting of circulation was unconstitutional.[24] In a series of cases from 1938 to 1943, the court restricted the ability of states and cities to license the distribution of printed material.[25] And, in 1941, the Court greatly expanded the ability to comment on pending court cases by restricting judicial contempt powers.[26] But it seemed to be the press criticism and court rulings replete with dangers to proprietary interests that caught the attention of the industry. To some, this series of events brought a hint of paranoia, to others serious thought about the role of the press in society.

The Commission Appears

THESE WERE the conditions Henry R. Luce, head of the *Time* magazine empire, surveyed in 1942. Some statement about the value of the American free press system seemed to Luce a logical counter to what he saw as an increasingly dismal situation. Luce himself could reach "at least a third of the total literate adult population in the country" through his communications empire and his personal stake in the matter may be assumed.[27] But his target apparently was much wider: he wanted to produce a restatement of the importance of a free-press system to the United States. He needed a group of researchers with impeccable credentials to formulate that statement. Luce mentioned the proposed inquiry to his fellow Yale alumnus and personal friend, Robert M. Hutchins, then president (later chancellor) of the University of Chicago, during a meeting of the Encyclopedia Britannica board of directors. Hutchins, a man unafraid of controversial assignments, agreed to add the inquiry to his list of projects.

While the Luce-funded Commission on Freedom of the Press was being organized, a change was occurring in the leadership of those championing freedom of the press. Much of the era's press criticism was aimed at a monolithic organization—"the press"—which linked owners and editors together as co-villians in subverting the true meaning of the First Amendment through an over-emphasis on proprietary rights. But the 1940s found the ANPA taking a back seat to the ASNE in promoting the profession's view of First Amendment rights. This is not to say that the ANPA disappeared from this battlefront; it was active, for instance, in a variety of court actions including the 1943-45 Associated Press antitrust suit. But it was the newspaper editors—perhaps because they felt themselves wrongly placed in the same category as the owners—who decided to launch a counterattack on press critics during the 1940s.

Early in 1944, it looked as if the editors were about to get some high quality, impartial help in their efforts to increase public understanding of the First Amendment and its importance to American society. In late January, *Atlantic Monthly* announced an essay contest to "examine the functioning of newspapers in a democracy,"[28] and on February 28 Robert M. Hutchins announced the creation of the Commission on Freedom of the Press:

> The Commission plans to examine areas and circumstances under which the press of the United States is succeeding or failing; to discover where free expression is or is not limited, whether by governmental censorship, pressures from readers or advertisers or the unwisdom of its proprietors or the timidity of its management.[29]

Hutchins explained that Henry R. Luce was putting up $200,000 to finance the inquiry but that Luce would have no control over the Commission. The Luce money would be channeled through the University of Chicago, but that institution would have no control over the Commission either. Hutchins himself would name Commission members and would supervise their activities. The study would take about two years to complete. Because Hutchins felt that an evaluation of the press could be done more objectively without working newspapermen on the Commission, none was included. The Commission membership was drawn from current or former members of the academic community, many of whom had personal connections with either Hutchins or the University of Chicago.[30] The assembled group was an impressive collection of leading figures in law, economics, social history, philosophy and theology.

As chairman of the Commission, Hutchins was himself a controversial figure. A lawyer and an educator, Hutchins had become president of the University of Chicago when he was 30 years old and promptly went about abolishing football and advocating a two-year bachelor of arts degree. Hutchins made his first appearance at an ASNE convention in 1930; before beginning his formal speech, he chastised the organization for making errors in his middle initial and in his profession. His main theme then and throughout his career as a press critic was the power and importance of the press as an educational tool and how the press was not meeting society's needs. "Sixteen years of formal classroom

education is as nothing compared to a lifetime of education through the press," he told the editors.[31]

Zechariah Chafee Jr., his generation's leading scholar on the free speech provision of the First Amendment, was Commission vice-chairman. A professor of law at Harvard University, Chafee was the author of *Free Speech in the United States*. Almost simultaneously with the issuance of the Commission's summary report, Chafee was named U.S. representative to the United Nations Economic and Social Council subcommittee drafting a statement on worldwide freedom of information.

John M. Clark, economics professor at Columbia University, was the political and social economist on the panel. A former University of Chicago professor, Clark held several posts in the Roosevelt Administration, including consultant to the National Recovery Administration. He also wrote the final analysis of the NRA for President Roosevelt in 1937.

Another lawyer on the panel was John Dickinson. A professor of law at the University of Pennsylvania, Dickinson also was general counsel to the Pennsylvania Railroad and had seen government service as assistant secretary of commerce from 1933 to 1935 and as assistant U.S. attorney general, 1935-37.

The philosopher of the group was William E. Hocking, professor of philosophy, emeritus, at Harvard. Among the topics which had come under his searching eye and prolific pen: the relationship between philosophy and law, problems of world politics, and interactions among philosophy, science and religion.

Harold D. Lasswell, a political scientist formerly at the University of Chicago, was director of war communications research for the Library of Congress when the panel was named, and was professor of law at Yale University when the report was issued. He brought considerable knowledge of public opinion and propaganda to the Commission's effort. By 1948, Lasswell had put forth his classic definition of communication: "who says what in which channel to whom with what effect."[32]

When named to the panel, poet Archibald MacLeish was Librarian of Congress. During his tenure on the Commission, MacLeish became assistant secretary of state in charge of public and cultural relations and in that capacity helped lay the groundwork for a United Nations freedom of the press guarantee. The press, accord-

ing to MacLeish, was important in foreign policy: "It would not be too much to say that the foreign relations of a modern state are conducted quite as much through the instruments of public international communication as through diplomatic representation and missions."[33]

Bringing a background in the study of social trends and national resources to the Commission was Charles E. Merriam, chairman of the political science department at the University of Chicago when the Commission was announced and professor of political science, emeritus, when the report was issued. A former Chicago alderman, Merriam was a one-time unsuccessful candidate for that city's mayor's office on the Republican ticket. He later served on the Public Works Administration's National Planning Board under Franklin Roosevelt.

Theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, professor of ethics and philosophy of religion at Union Theological Seminary, brought to the Commission a national reputation for writing on the subjects of man and society, ethics and morality.

Anthropologist Robert Redfield, dean of the division of social sciences at the University of Chicago, provided yet another perspective for the Commission. Redfield's early career had been spent on research expeditions in Guatemala and on the Yucatan Peninsula; he had written several books portraying the cultures of the villages he had visited.

The business viewpoint was represented in Beardsley Ruml, one-time dean of the social sciences division of the University of Chicago, who was chairman of the board of R. H. Macy and chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Ruml had developed and promoted the "pay-as-you-go" income tax plan for FDR. "I . . . learned to like newspapermen very much," he would later say of that experience; adding, "It is true, however, that they can do amazing things even to a hand-out, unless you sit down with them and go over what you want to say paragraph by paragraph."[34]

The social historian of the group was Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., professor of history at Harvard University. A leading historian of the day, Dr. Schlesinger was a member of the Nieman Foundation committee which selected and supervised working newspapermen

who spent a year on Harvard's campus under the Nieman Fellowship program.

An expert on Germany, Dr. George N. Shuster, the thirteenth Commission member, was president of Hunter College and a long-time contributor to and editor of *Commonweal.*

In addition to this stellar group, Dr. Hutchins attracted Robert D. Leigh, advisor to the foreign broadcast intelligence service of the Federal Communications Commission, to serve as staff director. Hutchins sweetened the position somewhat by making Leigh visiting professor of political science at the University of Chicago during his tenure as staff director.[35]

Even though the Commission on Freedom of the Press was drawn from academia, many commissioners had first-hand knowledge of press operations. The absence among Commission members of persons currently serving on the staffs of newspapers was not seen as a handicap; Hutchins expected to obtain information about newspaper operations from the testimony of newspapermen:

> We hope that the importance of its [the commission's] task will be so apparent that newspaper publishers and editors will be glad to appear before it to give testimony on their experiences in operating a free press. And we shall hear not only from ivory tower editors, but also from reporters, deskmen, research associates, advertising and circulation directors—and readers.[36]

If the commission wanted newspapers to understand the importance of its work, however, it would not have chosen to hold all sessions behind closed doors and to issue no working papers or reports. *Editor & Publisher,* in trying to cover commission proceedings, found its reporter limited to information from leaks and unnamed sources. The commission chose this method of operation to protect its sources and to encourage frank discussion of problems out of the glare of publicity. Although the decision to meet behind closed doors was eminently reasonable to commission members, such secrecy was to be a major stumbling block to the commission's acceptance.

Another problem was to be the commission's definition of "press." In court decisions defining the First Amendment, press had almost always been synonymous with the print media; newspapers, books and magazines. Other media such as movies and

radio were seldom considered parts of the press and consequently their protection under the First Amendment was cloudy at best. In an effort to extend the protection of the First Amendment to these other media, the Commission decided to define press as "all channels for communication of ideas—newspapers, magazines, radio and motion pictures."[37] To newspapers accustomed to the traditional definition of press, this broader vision was highly unpalatable.

The commission members decided on a two-pronged format for the study: one philosophical, one practical. Philosophical centers of discussion would be:

> What is the future of an ideal free society? What does the future hold in store for free societies in general? Does free discussion bring a community toward truth? Do people in this country feel that they are without control over events that influence their lives? Why did other free societies perish? What, indeed, is freedom?[38]

On the more practical side, the commission planned to look into the developing phenomenon of joint ownership of newspapers and radio, the effects of competition; governmental, legal and self-regulation of the press; advertiser and pressure group influence, and press control in other countries.

When this mixture of practical and philosophical questions was combined with the decision to meet in secret and to exclude newspapermen from the panel, the commissioners should have known that they were treading on dangerous ground. *Editor & Publisher*, however, continued to lavish praise on the group. In an April 1, 1944, article, reporter Philip Schuyler called the commission a "provocative panel" and added: "If past performance may be accepted as a criterion, they will turn in an intelligent, competent report. . . ." Schuyler seemingly went out of his way to find favorable data about the commissioners. In statements describing the philosophical bent of each commissioner, he described Harold Lasswell thus: "[An] advocate of 'instant reply' which is 'getting both sides of the story.' . . . Definitely against suppression or censorship, he believes in 'self regulation' of the press." Schuyler found some journalistic experience in the backgrounds of many commissioners. Reinhold Niebuhr, for instance, had helped his brother do "almost everything one can do on a country newspaper," and had worked his way through college as a newspaper

correspondent, getting $20 for his first story from the Chicago *Tribune*. Of publications by the commissioners, Schuyler said, "This paper could be filled with lists of books written by commission members." A few "pertinent" ones included Zechariah Chafee's *Free Speech in the United States* and Arthur Schelsinger's *History of American Life* series, which emphasized the role of newspapers in the development of the United States.[39]

E & P solicited editors' reactions to the commission. Respondents, according to the magazine, said that "the press is freer today than at any time in our history; that the greatest danger to freedom of the press is the lack of understanding by the general public of its true meaning; and that newspapermen should not be added to the commission." Richard J. Finnegan, editor of the Chicago *Times*, said, "Newspapermen probably would decline to serve on the commission because no man should judge his own case." And Basil L. (Stuffy) Walters, executive editor of the Minneapolis *Star-Journal*, added that the ASNE should "either parallel or follow this study." However, Wilbur Forrest, assistant editor of the New York *Herald Tribune*, warned the commission that any definition of press freedom which differed from the one held by the newspaper establishment could only be advocated by "predatory rascals or enemies of this nation." Despite this latter warning, *Editor & Publisher* summed up its opinion of editor response in the story's headline: "Editors Welcome Time-Life Inquiry into Press Freedom."[40] The magazine would soon become less enchanted.

The Commission at Work

WHILE THE Hutchins Commission was getting under way, results of the *Atlantic Monthly* press freedom essay competition were announced. In July, 1944, first prize-winner Robert Lasch, a Chicago *Sun* editorial writer, commented that Americans no longer saw newspapers "as trustees of constitutional liberty, but as the beneficiaries of a special privilege tending to be concentrated in fewer and fewer hands." He chastised the press for becoming "an integral part of the economic structure," adding that surviving newspaper owners had "the monolithic character of a class." He wrote: "It may be true that the people get the kind of newspapers they deserve, but what they deserve, in the sense of what they demand, is largely determined by what they get." He concluded: "The press will become free when its owners permit it to become free."[41]

Editor & Publisher angrily responded that Lasch's article was "based on an amazing set of false assumptions":

> These spokesmen will refuse to admit that the majority of American newspaper editors and publishers are honest, God-fearing men, each presenting his readers with a straight-forward, truthful news report, and commenting in his editorial columns as he sees fit. . . . Because they have acted as a governor to the political machine in Washington, and because they haven't hitched their wagon to the Roosevelt star, newspapers are now attacked as monopolies in favor of the status quo.[42]

The editorial should have put the commission on notice as to what to expect.

In September, 1944, one of the three runners-up in the *Atlantic Monthly* essay competition charged: "Freedom of the press is not the property of any one editor or publisher. . . . It is not something that can be locked away in the safe at night. It is merely one of the guarantees to the people. It is their property." The author added, "To most publishers and editors freedom of the press means the right to publish. Any infringement on that right is viewed as an assault on the freedom of the press." The meaning is

different to the man on the street: "He thinks of it, if he thinks of it at all, as meaning a free press. When he looks at a newspaper and sees it deliberately slanting the news toward its oft-shouted policies, it isn't, so far as he is concerned, a free press."[43] *E & P* was silent about this essay. The author was Ralph McGill, editor of the Atlanta *Constitution*.

Others within the profession were also speaking out, paving the way for a more receptive response to the commission's findings. Erwin D. Canham, *Christian Science Monitor* editor, for instance, said of the Lasch article: "Frankly I think he has criticized the newspapers more ably than most of our [ASNE] meetings have and I don't believe we have been nearly as clear as he has."[44] And John S. Knight, ASNE president in 1944-45, told a group of New York publishers that one of the challenges of the postwar era would a "public that both examines and questions the fundamental honesty, character, truth, objectivity, intelligence and courage of the American press."[45] David Lawrence, editor of *U.S. News*, warned the April, 1944, ASNE convention that the First Amendment no longer was "an adequate protection for freedom of the press in America." Citing "judicial interpretation" which "nullified the original purposes" of the amendment, Lawrence proposed a new amendment to the Constitution which would forbid Congress, executive agencies or the states from limiting, restricting or regulating the media except on the basis of fraud, obscenity, libel or act of treason.[46] The ASNE nevertheless voted to embark upon a massive campaign to promote the principle of freedom of information abroad and to create a better image of the press at home.

While problems of the media were being discussed in other forums throughout 1944, the Commission on Freedom of the Press was deliberating. In December, 1944, it reappeared in the pages of *Editor & Publisher* with a list of witnesses heard: Morris Ernst, American Newspaper Guild attorney; Arthur Garfield Hays, American Civil Liberties Union director; Elmer Davis, chief, Office of War Information; Bryon Price, director of war censorship; James L. Fry, past Federal Communications Commission chairman; Postmaster General Frank C. Walters, and Huntington C. Cairns, censorship chief for the U.S. Treasury. *E&P* reporter Philip Schuyler's article concentrated on a philosophical clash between

Ernst and Hays. Hays, wrote Schuyler, believed that "chain newspapers under one ownership . . . mean 'better newspapers.' . . . In other words, he's against all restrictions on expression except lack of money." Ernst, on the other hand, had said:

> The real problem is the ever shrinking market place [of ideas]. I have no concern over opinion expressed, just as long as diverse opinions can be easily and fully expressed. A free press can best be safeguarded and democracy most faithfully served by diversity. . . . We must initiate and support everything that contributes to diversity and combat anything that operates against it.[47]

It was this December session that ended the honeymoon between *Editor & Publisher* and the commission. Edwin L. James, managing editor of the New York *Times*, and the "first and only newspaperman" to appear before the commission, "declined to reveal the nature of his testimony for publication."[48] The magazine editorialized:

> If the witnesses were queried in a glass house . . . the fine points and failings of our press would be laid on the record for everyone to study. In that way the Commission would gain the benefit of agreement or rebuttal from the press or public. It would increase the scope and volume of opinion before the Commission. Then . . . newspapers could take steps to correct any glaring evils uncovered and to improve the position of the free press before June 1946, rather than wait until then to hear the results, good or bad.[49]

Dr. Robert Leigh, commission staff director, after pointing out that the magazine should understand the need for confidentiality, refused the request. In the next week's magazine, *E&P* commented: "Reporting news of what the commission is doing while the opinions . . . are fluid . . . is, in our opinion, the true American tradition of the free press."[50] Although the magazine could not understand why a group studying the press would shun press coverage, it vowed to continue its efforts to report the commission's activities—and to oppose the closed-meeting policy.

The commission disappeared from view in 1945. Editors and publishers had their attention diverted from it to other controversial issues: a study of newspaper ownership concentration, a Supreme Court decision and the ASNE effort to promote worldwide freedom of information.

Newspaper ownership concentration had been a repeated target of press critics throughout the decade. Now the critics found some scholarly research to give weight to their concern that the power

to communicate through newspapers was falling into fewer and fewer hands. A 1945 *Journalism Quarterly* article by Raymond B. Nixon produced evidence that "daily newspaper competition . . . has been eliminated in all but 117 American cities. Ten entire states now have no local competition whatever." Worried about absentee ownership, Nixon contended that advertisers were often victims of consolidation because noncompetitive media could charge higher rates. "Regulation of the purely business aspects of journalism by governmental commission, in the same way that public utilities are regulated," he added, "may be more imminent than we realize."[51]

The Supreme Court lent credence to Nixon's view when it ruled, 5-3, that the Associated Press was a monopoly in restraint of trade. Writing for the majority, Justice Hugo Black declared:

> The First Amendment . . . rests on the assumption that the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential for the welfare of the public, that a free press is a condition for a free society. . . . Freedom of the press from governmental interference under the First Amendment does not sanction repression of that freedom by private interests.[52]

For the more nervous among newspaper leaders, Justice Black's ruling could be seen as an implied threat of governmental interference if the press did not broaden its base of support and better serve the nation. The theme of the decade's press criticism seemed to have found its way into a Supreme Court decision. Colonel McCormick, a co-defendant in the original suit, vowed to seek congressional action to override the court.

The situation was looking bleak for newspaper publishers and editors. Even the American Society of Newspaper Editors' globe-circling mission on behalf of including the First Amendment in postwar treaties and on behalf of free and equal access to information was marred by questions about the economic control of the press in the United States. Led by Wilbur Forrest, assistant editor of the New York *Herald Tribune*, the trio of free-press missionaries was forced to report that foreign newspapermen and political leaders often saw the American press as "heavily sprinkled with wealthy and often undemocratic ownership which seeks power at the expense of international, national or local advancement." The ASNE was told that this impression was "fostered by books and

literature of the left wing variety carrying charges which have gone unchallenged for years."[53] This reception left a bad taste in Forrest's mouth, and Forrest was ASNE president in 1947 when the Commission on Freedom of the Press issued its report.

If 1945 was a bad year for the press, so was 1946. The Supreme Court brought newspapers under the wage and hour law and extended regulatory provisions to newspapers with five-tenths of one per cent of their readers out-of-state.[54] Although the Court also made it even more difficult to hold newspapers in contempt of court and turned back an attempt by the postmaster general to use second-class mailing privileges as a weapon to censor magazines,[55] it was business regulation of the press that caught the attention of newspaper leaders.

Following on the Supreme Court rulings was a report from a Special Senate Committee to Study Problems of Small Business dealing with the growth of newspaper chains and the diversity of opinion in a democracy. The report said it is "a matter of concern that citizens in so many communities can buy only one daily paper, and that in so many cases, these single dailies present the point of view of the same newspaper chain."[56]

In England, a Royal Commission to investigate the press had been set up by the House of Commons in November, 1944. Brought on by the repeated demands of the National Union of Journalists, the Royal Commission was to look into ownership control and financing, the influence of chains and distortion and suppression of news.[57]

Could such an inquiry occur in the United States? Newspaper leaders were not so sure any more. Compounding their worries was the publication of a book by Morris Ernst, the prominent civil liberties advocate and American Newspaper Guild attorney, whose concern was that "concentrated economic power . . . acts as a restraint of thought." Ernst called for a Congressional probe of the press and proffered some solutions of his own: bar multiple ownership of media outlets, bar ownership by media of support facilities such as newsprint plants, outlaw interlocking directorates among communications media, tax chains to help smaller publications while discouraging larger ones, outlaw boiler plate services, reform advertising rates to make those of smaller outlets more competitive with larger ones. Although Ernst did not hold out

much hope of getting Congress involved in such an endeavor, he did feel that "we are learning that failure of the government to act can be as detrimental to the rights secured by the First Amendment as an act of positive interference."[58]

As this series of events unfolded in 1946, the Commission on Freedom of the Press ended a year of obscurity. In February, Philip Schuyler reported in *Editor & Publisher* that the commission had decided to issue a summary report and six special studies. "All will be written with a view of having an influence over a 10-year period," Schuyler reported. He quoted Dr. Leigh as saying, "It will take that long for public action." The commissioners had decided against leaking portions of documents prior to publication and had hired an advertising agency to promote them upon release. The study was taking a little longer than expected, Schuyler reported, because the general report would have to have "the approval of all members after a line-by-line reading of the text."[59] By April Dr. Leigh was back in print saying that the general report had been postponed from Spring 1946 until Fall 1946 and that the Encyclopedia Britannica (a wholly-owned subsidiary of the University of Chicago) had given the commission $15,000 to help it complete its deliberations. Time Inc., Henry Luce's organization, was given first-refusal rights for all commission reports.[60]

The Luce organization passed up the first of the commission's special studies, *Peoples Speaking to Peoples*, a volume on international communication by Llewellyn White and Robert D. Leigh. A condensed version appeared in the March 30, 1946, issue of *Editor & Publisher*. In addressing problems of international communication, the authors suggested that foreign correspondents needed self-regulation, a code of ethics and a means of strict enforcement of that code as a preferred alternative to government supervision. *Editor & Publisher*'s treatment of the book included comments from the press association chiefs who had been active in promoting worldwide freedom of information. It criticized the book's recommendations as impractical and as favoring government regulation,[61] which it did not. *E&P* had begun its campaign to label the Commission as impractical and as favorable to government supervision of the press.

The Report is Issued

THE COMMISSION missed its fall 1946 deadline but made plans to release the report early in 1947. Before its findings could be announced, however, a special U.S. Senate document clouded the horizon.

Senator James E. Murray, D-Mont., released a report as outgoing chairman of the Special Committee to Study Problems of American Small Business entitled *Survival of a Free, Competitive Press.* In it he called for Congressional supervision, through the Federal Trade Commission, of competition, concentration and ownership in the newspaper and radio industries. The report proposed that the FCC study FM radio development, and he called for a government study to determine whether advances in technology could be used by smaller units in the communication industry while another government study would examine the alleged newsprint shortage. It called for a review of newspaper feature syndicates to see if they were in violation of antitrust laws and another of the postal rate system as it applied to newspapers and periodicals.[62] However the 1946 mid-term elections had returned a Republican-dominated Congress, Murray had lost his committee chairmanship and the recommendations would be allowed to die. But the fact that such recommendations had been put on paper, that a senator felt that the government could and should intervene to such an extent in the newspaper business, was in itself cause for alarm.

Senator Murray had issued his report in February. On March 26, 1947, Robert M. Hutchins released *A Free and Responsible Press.* This slim volume contained none of the bitterness and name-calling found in earlier books of press criticism. It strongly opposed government intervention in press activity and favored, above all else, the press's cleaning its own house.

The thirteen commissioners decided that freedom of the press was indeed in danger in the United States. The ability to communicate had become vitally important, they said, but the number

of Americans able to have their views reflected in the nation's media had decreased dramatically. Those who controlled access to the press did not, in the commission's opinion, facilitate communication of a wide spectrum of ideas. Because those who controlled the media engaged "from time to time in practices which the society condemns," the commission feared society "will inevitably undertake to control" the press. Realizing that industrialization and the rapid emergence of America as a world power had aggravated these problems, the commissioners tried to be sympathetic, but they could not excuse "the failure of the directors of the press to recognize the needs of a modern nation and . . . accept the responsibilities which these needs impose upon them." Solving this problem would be difficult, they said. Government intervention, for instance, "might cure the ills . . . killing the freedom in the process." But, "the press is not free if those who operate it behave as though their position conferred on them the privilege of being deaf to ideas which the processes of free speech have brought to public attention."[63]

The "time has come for the press to assume a new public responsibility," the commission declared. To equip the people for the complex world of the late 1940s, the press needed to provide a "truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account fo the day's events in a context which gives them meaning." And indeed the press must "provide a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism" becoming, if necessary, "common carriers of the public expression" in order to secure a hearing for a wide variety of viewpoints. Given the interdependency of the modern world, it was vital that the press project a "representative picture of constituent groups in society," avoiding stereotyping and explaining group values and goals as completely as possible. Such a portrayal would naturally lead to the presentation and clarification of "the goals and values of society" with the press serving as an educational instrument. Building further on this notion, it logically followed that the press would provide "full access to the day's intelligence" for the use of readers.[64] With the implementation of these goals, the press, at least in the commission's view, would be on its way to meeting society's needs.

The communications revolution, including television and experimentation with both facsimile newspapers and FM radio, caused

the commision to wonder who would control such developments. Citing increasing concentration of newspaper ownership and cross-media ownerships, the commissioners were concerned lest new technical developments come under newspaper control and thus fail to expand public access to new communications outlets. In support of these concerns, including the big-business orientation of newspapers, the commission let respected newspapermen—such as William Allen White, Virginius Dabney and Erwin D. Canham—do the talking for them.

The commission took a dim view of press performance. "The economic logic of private enterprise forces most units of the mass communication industry to seek an ever larger audience. The result is an omnibus product which includes something for everybody." The commission had hit upon the basic newspaper dilemma of whether to educate or entertain its readers:

> Many activities of the utmost consequence lie below the surface of what are conventionally regarded as reportable facts: more power machinery; fewer men tending machines; more hours of leisure, more school per child; decrease of intolerance; successful negotiation of labor contracts; increase of participation in music through the schools; increase in sales of books of biography and history.

These topics, said the report, are pushed aside by "stories of night-club murders, race riots, strike violence and quarrels among public officials."[65]

In addition the commission charged that the press ignored "the errors and misrepresentations and the lies and scandals, of which its members are guilty."[66] Perhaps increased professionalization within the newspaper business would solve some of these problems, it said. Realizing that a highly independent and idosyncratic press would need to be convinced of the value of such professional standards and that such an effort would most likely be a long-term one, the commission cast about for some stopgap measures to alleviate the problems it had found and to pave the way for future changes. As sources of such immediate assistance, the commission looked to the government, to the press itself, and to the general public.

Seeking redress of perceived misdeeds of the press from the government was a dangerous business and the commissioners realized this. But it did seem reasonable that the government could

find some way to extend the constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and press to radio and motion pictures while at the same time discouraging ownership concentration by careful application of antitrust laws. Because the commission believed it was difficult for an average person to obtain satisfaction from a newspaper which had wronged him, a mandatory retraction or right-of-reply law seemed possible. With the need for increased knowledge on a broad spectrum of political and social issues growing daily, the government could improve access to the marketplace of ideas by repealing the Alien Registration Act and other measures which restricted the public's freedom to speak on "revolutionary changes." And finally, if the administration found that the media purposefully blocked full dissemination of news about one of its programs, a governmental communications network to deliver the news directly to the public might not be out of the question.[67]

But the commission was not really pleased with any of the suggestions for government action. A better solution to the problems of the press, it said, rested within the press itself. Of its own volition, the press could become a common carrier of information and open its columns to a broad spectrum of information and discussion. To counter decreased competition and increased concentration of ownership, the press could actively encourage the creation of new outlets for opinion. To discourage news slanted to fit editorial policies, even outright lies, the press could engage in "vigorous mutual criticism"—in public. And, to improve the quality of information disseminated, the press could upgrade the professionalism and competence of newspaper staffs.[68]

The commission's greatest hope for media improvement, however, lay within the reach of the public. Readers, listeners and viewers, it said, had immense powers over the media if they were ever exercised. It was the commission's goal to educate and goad this silent audience into action. Through public pressure, nonprofit institutions such as colleges and universities could be motivated to work on projects designed to upgrade the quality of the mass media. Journalism education could be improved through the same public pressures; here the commission thought that those studying to become journalists should be exposed to much broader liberal arts backgrounds in order to give them knowledge on the subject matter they covered as reporters. Public demand for

quality reporting could result in all such changes, the report said. Finally, the commission revealed its dream: a new, independent agency designed to appraise press performance and make annual reports on what it found.[69] In appraising the commission's recommendations in the report's introduction, Hutchins declared:

> The Commission's recommendations are not startling. The most surprising thing about them is that nothing more surprising could be proposed. The Commission finds that these things are all that can be properly done. It is of the utmost importance, then, that these things be done and that the neglect of them, which imperils the freedom of the press, should be replaced by a serious and continuing concern for the moral relation of the press to society.

The report's introduction also explained that the commission "did not conduct elaborate 'research.' It sought to fill out gaps in its information or to answer questions which arose in the course of its discussions." Hutchins explained that the full commission heard 58 witnesses. The staff interviewed more than 225 persons connected with the press. Commission members studied 176 documents prepared by its members and staff. From Hutchins' viewpoint, the subject of press freedom had been researched rather adequately and the report was sound.[70]

Press Reaction

MANY MEMBERS of the press knew what the commission report would say before it was released. The advertising agency hired to promote the commission's work had sent out news releases. One appeared in *Editor & Publisher* on February 1. The commission report, the release said, would state that freedom of the press was in danger in the United States because, "in the hands of a few gigantic business units, the media of mass communication vital to the life of our democracy have failed to accept the full measure of their responsibility to the public."[71] Advance copies of the report were sent out for review purposes. When Dr. Hutchins held his press conference on March 26 to release the report officially, the press was ready for him.

The wire services carried information on the report, and most newspapers took their straight news stories from them. The March 27 news stories carried excerpts from the report, comments from Dr. Hutchins' press conference, listed commission members, and quoted from a *Fortune* editorial which was distributed with the report. Very few news stories appeared on page one.[72] The Milwaukee *Journal*, the paper founded by Lucius Nieman, placed its story there; the Chicago *Daily News*, owned by past ASNE president John S. Knight, ran a page-one blurb referring the reader to a story on an inside page. More typical was the placement on page 8D by the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, the page 19 treatment of the New York *Herald Tribune* and the page 24 story of the New York *Times*.

Most initial reports were straight news accounts. A significant departure from the norm came from the Chicago *Tribune*, which headlined: " 'A Free Press' (Hitler Style) Sought for U.S.," and, in a story bylined by Frank Hughes, asserted:

> The book apparently is a major effort in the campaign of a determined group of totalitarian thinkers led by such housetop shouters as Harold L. Ickes, Morris Ernst, George Seldes and Archibald MacLeish, who want to discredit

the free press of America or put it under a measure of governmental control sufficient to stop effective criticism of New Deal socialism, the one-world doctrine, and internationalism.[73]

The press that greeted the Hutchins Commission report was financially successful and on the verge of a communications revolution. The largest chains, Scripps-Howard, Hearst and Gannett, each held fewer than 20 papers. There were still three wire services in operation. Newspaper circulation exceeded the number of families in the nation. Radio was found in 93 percent of all American homes; television was anticipated but had not yet arrived.[74]

Even with these seemingly rosy statistics, the press was troubled. In addition to its history of problems over the past decade, it faced three important new issues in 1947, each of which could have been affected by *A Free and Responsible Press*.

The ASNE and press association chiefs were still working for the adoption of a free-press guarantee by the United Nations. Negotiations had begun when commission member Archibald MacLeish was assistant secretary of state; they were continuing now under the supervision of Assistant Secretary of State William Benton, former vice-president and assistant to Chancellor Robert M. Hutchins at the University of Chicago. (The continuing relationship between the two men was apparent when, the day before the report was officially released, Benton accompanied Dr. Hutchins on a visit to the White House to present a copy of *A Free and Responsible Press* to President Truman.)[75] In 1947, debates on the free-press guarantee were occurring in the UN Economic and Social Council, and the American press would naturally assume that comments about the inadequacies of the nation's media would not help the cause. Already various roadblocks had been thrown up; the discussion periodically bogged down in the morass of defining "press responsibility" and in deciding just how to fit that concept into a UN declaration.

For Colonel Robert McCormick and other conservative publishers, 1947 presented the best and probably the last time to try for legislation to overturn the Supreme Court's decision in the Associated Press antitrust suit. The measure had been lost in the rush to adjourn in 1946, but now a Republican-controlled House Judiciary Subcommittee would hold hearings on the matter in May. Any hope for passage was dashed, however, when the sub-

committee showed great responsiveness to those who opposed the bill, especially its harshest critics. The measure never got out of subcommittee.

For college journalism professors, 1947 meant the beginning of a long-sought accreditation program, for which it needed the cooperation of media representatives. The commission report, with its reference to emulating the professional standards of doctors and lawyers, caused some of the media representatives to worry about whether accreditation was a step toward licensing. And the report's uncomplimentary remarks about the quality of journalism education were especially inopportune.

With these major efforts pending, with increased governmental intervention in previously exclusive media provinces and with the constant harping of press critics poisoning the atmosphere, the summary report of the commission became fair game. Press response to the report, however, had several general characteristics. First, there was a different flavor to the criticism presented in-house, or to audiences of media personnel only, as opposed to the reaction presented to the public. Second, although some in-house commentary seemed harsher than that in newspaper editorials, it must be stressed that the in-house criticism was not uniformly harsh. And third, areas of criticism tended to be alike both in-house and outside where the emphasis was primarily on the composition of the commission and the quality of its workmanship, but not on its recommendations.

The definition of "press" used by the commission was criticized. Press leaders contended that newspapers were not in the same category as movies or radio. The absence of newspapermen on the commission drew criticism, with many protesting that nonnewspaper people could not understand the complexities of the business. The panel was derided as being composed of eleven professors, one banker (Ruml) and a poet (MacLeish). The connection of most of the commissioners with a center of radical educational experimentation, the University of Chicago, also drew criticism.

Critics also labeled *A Free and Responsible Press* a poor product, in spite of the $215,000 available to finance its work. This type of complaint centered on the commission's failure to do any systematic research, pointed out that the commissioners brought

only personal, subjective opinions to the deliberations and suggested that a more in-depth look at the press might have resulted in different conclusions. Initial copies of the report contained factual errors such as isolating the Gannett newspapers in New York State, and these mistakes, said the critics, could have been corrected if even minimal research had been done. Many other newspaper leaders were unhappy because the report did not list specific offenders as earlier volumes of press criticism had done. Apparently some newspapers wanted to know whether their performance was considered acceptable by the commission and *A Free and Responsible Press* did not say.

The general condemnation of monopoly newspaper ownership was distressing to media-connected readers. Not only did this touch a sensitive nerve in newspaper circles, but it appeared to condemn one-owner communities with excellent newspapers, such as Louisville, Ky., while seeming to shower approval on multi-owner cities with mediocre newspapers, such as Boston. Some critics saw a strong leftist leaning in the report, especially when they got to the part about the repeal of the Alien Registration Act and to a seemingly laudatory footnote about the Soviet press system. The writing style was seen as too academic, too vague, too philosophical, too dull.

A common complaint was that the commission did not map out a specific plan to cure the ills found. The commission merely said that the press needed to clean its own house. It ignored the difficult question of what internal controls the press should use and how these controls could be made viable without some sort of compulsive apparatus. It also skipped over the sticky point of how to determine when such controls had failed and whether the government could or should intervene in press operations to force an undefined conception of proper performance.

(More recent interpretations of press commentary on the commission's summary report have stressed that much of the criticism was focused on the commission's suggestion for a national press council. Although Dr. Hutchins has said that this was the most important recommendation of the commission, a 1948 study of press reaction to *A Free and Responsible Press* shows that press response to the report did not center on the press council idea. The 1947 criticism of the report, according to that study, focused

on ambiguities in the document, on the lack of elaborate research by the commission, and on the fact that no newspapermen were members.[76] Even *Editor & Publisher*, the strongest periodical critic of the report, said that the press council idea had merit: "A continuing agency to appraise and report annually upon the performance of the press as suggested by the commission might serve a useful purpose in gathering facts which would give a fair and impartial picture of the press."[77])

Many criticisms aimed at *A Free and Responsible Press* may be seen as valid. There was no excuse for factual errors, but later printings of the report contained appropriate corrections. The definition of "press" was bound to create problems, but the umbrella term "mass media" was not yet common. Criticisms of the research were perhaps less valid. Special studies on the movies, radio, international communication and legal problems were filled with historical background, specific examples, facts and figures. These special studies served to explicate the primary commission comments and recommendations in those respective areas. True, no separate study was done on newspapers. The correlation between summary report recommendations and substantial detail in the studies held true only in the areas of broadcasting, motion pictures and international communication. Why a special study on newspapers was not published is not known.

The deletion of specific references and the general tone of the report may have been due to the necessity of making the document palatable to all thirteen commissioners. Although the summary report was first drafted by Archibald MacLeish, "the firebrand on the Commission,"[78] it went through nine drafts[79] before Hutchins had a product the commission could approve.[80]

After a month of editorial commentary on the report, commission member John Clark remarked: "Our critics have put a little too much emphasis on the report being the only result of $215,000 expenditure. That isn't so. Some of the best work of the three-year study is contained in separate books which are being published." Clark said the commission was designed to represent the consumer and that "there was not the slightest idea that the Report contained a solution" to media problems, but rather that the commission explored the ramifications of the communications industry because "[w]e do know that something very big is

happening to mass communications." Viewing the criticism to that time, Clark concluded the press had treated the report "more favorably than we had a right to expect."[81]

Editor & Publisher took the lead in criticizing the report. Its March 29 issue carried seven articles, plus a full-page editorial, for a total of thirteen pages on the report—a record amount of space given to the topic of press criticism to that date and an indication of how important the Hutchins Commission report was to the industry. The scope of the magazine's coverage indicated planning far in advance of the March 26 report release date. One fairly straight news summary of *A Free and Responsible Press* was offered; another story was a summary of Dr. Hutchins' news conference on the day the report was issued; a third article dealt with a companion volume issued the same day, *The American Radio* by Llewellyn White.

The critical articles began with one from Tom H. Keene, editor of the Elkhart (Ind.) *Truth* and a past president of the Inland Daily Press Association. He disputed commission comments critical of one-newspaper-owner towns. Using his own situation as an example, Keene held that one-newspaper-owner towns could be beneficial to the community.[82] Frank Tripp of Gannett Newspapers condemned the commission's suggestion that freedom of speech be broadened in political and economic areas:

> The loyal public is just now more concerned with preserving the institution of their way of life rather than particular parts of it. They will not agree that restraints against any type of sedition are too severe, nor tolerate the press or its critics meddling with them for the sake of freer expression of opinion.[83]

The responses of journalism educators were explored in another article with the writer commenting that "several of the journalism heads frankly charged Robert M. Hutchins . . . with incorporating into the report a long-expressed antipathy to college journalism courses."[84]

Perhaps the most important of the critical articles came from Wilbur Forrest, assistant editor of the New York *Herald Tribune* and ASNE president. Stressing that he commented as an individual, not as ASNE president, Forrest declared:

> I would be inclined to say that the report . . . might be regarded as constructive criticism if it did not so clearly bear the imprint of having been

> influenced by a pattern of thought long designed to undermine public confidence in the American press as an institution. . . . I am not going to dwell at length on this synthetic crisis which has been whipped up by the erudite men of the commission. It seems to me, however, that the press is under criticism by amateurs . . . content to condemn the faults of a few in the newspaper industry and on this evidence, indict the whole.

Forrest added that the world was looking to the U.S. press for leadership and, "I, for one, further deplore any attempt from any quarter to tear down our prestige at a time we seek by our leadership to establish world freedom of information." Labeling the report an effort to paint "the American press in dark colors," Forrest found that the report had cut deeply into the image of the press he had been working so hard to build. He would not be content to let it stand unchallenged.[85]

The *E&P* editorial used the analogy of a grand jury indictment handed down against the press: "Lack of documentary evidence" would not allow the indictment to stand; and even if there were some kernels worth saving, "the whole report is full of academic doubletalk that muddles rather than clarifies the criticism." The magazine contended that a news story headlined "EXTRA: BEETHOVEN CRASHES FIRST GRADE!" would not gain readership, even though this was the type of story the commission wanted carried. The idea of a continuing agency to appraise press performance, as mentioned above, was seen as having some merit, if only to "help straighten out the professors' thinking." The idea of mutual self-criticism was disregarded; the magazine considered that process already underway in the press. And the commission's attempt to label newspapers as common carriers of information struck a tender nerve because such a classification "would put them in line for ultimate regulation."[86]

In an April 5 editorial, *Editor & Publisher* continued to protest against the commission:

> The overall impression at first is given that the Commission considers a free press necessary. . . . But interwoven in the whole report are statements attempting to break down faith in a free press and to prove its irresponsibility. . . . It seems to us that the Commission might do a little investigating . . . to find out whether it was trying to write an objective report . . . or whether it innocently okayed the prejudiced writings of someone . . . trying to embarrass the press.[87]

This issue of *E&P* also offered a story headlined, "Commission Report Under Fire Generally." Of the nine sources cited, however, only three could be classified as "generally" criticizing the report; two of them came from private communications to the magazine. Other material criticized points in the report but did not condemn it completely.[88] After this issue, the commission and its report were no longer of central interest to the magazine.

The other main source of in-house criticism came from journalism educators. Robert W. Desmond, president of the American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism, wrote in *Journalism Quarterly*, "the value of the report is compromised by its serious shortcomings. . . . There is reason to fear that the report—supported by the eminent names attached to it—may become merely a new stick with which to beat the press." Most of Desmond's statement, however, concerned the commission's brief comments on journalism schools. Desmond praised the quality of journalism education and did not touch upon the commission's general recommendations for the press.[89]

Although *Editor & Publisher* and *Journalism Quarterly* were the main sources of editorial commentary on *A Free and Responsible Press*, they were by no means the only media-related journals to comment. In fact, ten of eleven contemporary professional periodicals[90] examined in this study had something to say about the report, addressing their comments to those specialized parts of the whole communications industry which they served. When these other professional journals are reviewed for editorial commentary on the matter, *Editor & Publisher* and *Journalism Quarterly* came to represent the minority viewpoint on the report.

Publishers' Auxiliary, the magazine for small daily and weekly newspapers, found that the academic level of the report "makes the commission vulnerable to the jibes of clarity conscious newspapermen." Even so:

> The commission's study should not be ridiculed as at least one trade publication has done to date. In was an honest, but too scholarly and abstractional attempt at being helpful, and the press should accept it in that light. Those who have not taken this criticism in good grace would do better to set an example of a free and responsible press that will show America how wrong the commission is and by remembering that a free press gives men the right to say what they think.[91]

From *Printers Ink*, a magazine of advertising, management and sales, came: "Though the report comes from a group of academicians, it is worthy of serious consideration since many of the charges are neither new nor novel but merely a phase of a continuing and mounting campaign of criticism against the press as now constituted."[92] *Advertising Age*, another journal of advertising and marketing, agreed: "The commission found many ills . . . but . . . on the whole it has found a good, workable efficient framework; and that the remedy for existing ills lies almost wholly in the acceptance of still greater responsibility and more efficient self-regulation." The magazine added: "The general concept of the assumption of greater responsibility and its implementation through self-regulation is completely acceptable."[93]

Journals of the working press supported the commission's recommendations, although not in as voluminous a manner as *Editor & Publisher* had condemned them. The editor of *Quill*, the magazine of Sigma Delta Chi (since renamed the Society of Professional Journalists), declared that the report "managed to offend both editors of the rule-of-thumb school and doctors of philosophy who teach journalism." But the editor said he had never seen a better summary of press problems, adding:

> This report is too important to be subject to some of the sniping that has passed for criticism. . . . The recommendations are not startling. Neither do the faults found with the press constitute a brand new indictment. They have been charged before. Most of us will welcome this major addition to the professional bookshelf whether we admit to all its premises or accept any of its remedies.[94]

The commission's charges, commented *The Guild Reporter*, "though couched in professional terms, constitute a scathing denunciation of the major shortcomings of the nation's varied media of public expression." The *Reporter* saw the commission as doing an "exhaustive analysis of the function and structure of the various media" and, as a result, "effectively blasted, without naming it, the narrow, commercialized interpretation of 'freedom of the press' advanced by the American Newspaper Publishers Association and allied groups." Of the report's importance, the *Reporter* said: "Anyone interested in freedom of the press, or the improvement of our mass communications media insofar as providing the people with more information is concerned, will recog-

nize the value of this book which stimulates thought and may well generate some new ideas."[95]

The Hutchins Commission's conclusions marked "an important event in the history of American journalism," according to *Nieman Reports,* the journal published by the Society of Nieman Fellows at Harvard University. Louis M. Lyons, a 20-year newspaper veteran and curator of the Nieman Foundation, was disappointed because the commission did not find a cure for press problems, but for him the report's value was "in alerting the public and warning the publishers of the failure of the press to meet the public need." He found that because the commission was a "highly competent, independent body with adequate resources," it could produce a warning which would be a "hard one to brush off or forget as so many criticisms of less weight have been brushed off and ignored."[96]

As a voice of weekly newspapers, *The American Press* resented the exclusion of weeklies from the report. The magazine acknowledged that the report had been criticized and that perhaps weeklies were better off for not having been included. It reconsidered, however, and said: "We resent the fact that they were considered of insufficient importance to cover, even though the findings might have been unsatisfactory."[97]

Among the electronic media, *Broadcasting-Telecasting* centered its comments on Llewellyn White's *The American Radio.* Its editorial writer found the volume not dangerous, perhaps impractical, and almost certainly giving voice to many broadcasters' dreams and frustrations.[98]

Of the professional periodicals reviewed, only the ASNE *Bulletin* did not comment on the report. That honor was left to the upcoming convention and, before that, to ASNE President Forrest.

Less than two weeks after the commission report appeared, on April 6, Chancellor Hutchins and ASNE President Forrest had a face-to-face encounter on a "University of Chicago Round Table" radio broadcast. Joining Hutchins was George N. Shuster, another commission member. While Forrest contended that the American press was "probably the best in the world,"[99] he conceded that some newspapers were not of top quality. Such a concession brought this from Hutchins: "I cannot understand . . . the dif-

ference . . . between you and us. . . . You say that some papers . . . are not doing what they should do; we say that. You say that some newspapers are doing a very fine job; we say that. What is the problem?"[100]

The difference, according to Forrest, was that the commission said "other things" as well, explaining, "I do not believe that the average American paper panders through sensation—murders, night-club murders, race riots, strike violence, quarrels among public officials and all that type of thing."[101] He later returned to what was fast becoming his major theme:

> I have worked pretty hard . . . to convince newspaper people and government officials in other lands . . . that the American press is in the position of leadership . . . [to] bring about world freedom of information. . . . I am afraid that it [the report] has hurt. . . . Some of the people abroad are willing to think that we are not so good.[102]

Shuster tried to mollify Forrest with the idea that other nations would think more highly of the American press because it could accept criticism and improve itself. Forrest could not agree; the stage was set for the April 17 ASNE convention.

That Forrest had taken his hurt feelings to the convention was apparent from his presidential address. Granting that some members might "see the charges as justly drawn" and that these members might want the ASNE "to take cognizance of the commission's views and organize some manner of saving the American press by raising its standards," Forrest reminded members that the Hutchins Commission had labeled the organization as "a social organization backed up by a high-sounding code of newspaper ethics about which it does nothing whatsoever." The commission's conclusion about the ASNE—according to Forrest—was based upon a violation of its Canons of Journalism which occurred in the mid-1920s. Forrest felt that the charges were incorrect and that they showed the Society in an unfair light.[103]

When it came time to debate resolutions, Forrest took the unprecedented step of relinquishing the chair to Second Vice-President Erwin D. Canham. Forrest was then ready to join in the debate, and Canham, a Hutchins Commission supporter, was silenced when the following resolution was introduced:

> The American Society of Newspaper Editors welcomes informed criticisms of the newspaper press and offers its cooperation to any responsible study of newspaper problems and shortcomings.

> The recent report of the Commission on Freedom of the Press issued through the University of Chicago has already been carefully analyzed by many daily newspapers. They have pointed out inaccuracies, omissions, and the inclusion in "the press" of all other agencies of mass communication.
>
> This society has long recognized the need for self-improvement of newspapers and believes our press is performing with increasing effectiveness and fairness in the duty of keeping the American people the best informed people in the world. . . .[104]

The debate was spirited. L. R. Blanchard of the Gannett organization disliked the resolution; he "would prefer to . . . ignore the report of the Commission."[105] He found support from E. Robert Stevenson, editor of the Waterbury (Conn.) *Republican-American*, who asked, "Why should we adopt a resolution which presumably . . . adds dignity to the report?"[106] The cry was taken up by Melville F. Ferguson, editor of the Philadelphia *Evening Bulletin*: "I see no reason that we should single out this particular group. Next year it will be some other group, and the year after that another group."[107] The society voted to strike out the paragraph mentioning the Commission on Freedom of the Press by name.

After that, an effort was made to change the direction of the resolution altogether. Said Paul Block of the Paul Block Newspapers: "I feel that some day the society will . . . find that it is necessary to take group action on this Commission report. . . . This resolution evades the main issues and will not please those of you who are angry at the Commission, and it doesn't please those of my persuasion who are more afraid than angry, although angry."[108] Forrest disagreed. Members, he said, must speak out: "We welcome constructive criticism, of course, but if we remain silent about this sort of report that has just come out, which will go into every school and library in the land . . . it is sort of an assent to it, a sort of belief in it or a lack of guts to say anything about it."[109]

A substitute motion requiring the ASNE to "seek correction of the press practices subject to valid criticism"; to answer "false, misinformed, or malicious criticism"; and to set up an ASNE committee to appraise the commission report and to make a "detailed, factual, documented reply" was introduced.[110] That effort caused Richard Finnegan, editor of the Chicago *Times* and resolutions committee chairman, to remark:

> The serious part of this report comes out of the fact that under the grandstand of an unused football field around the University of Chicago there came for the first time in human history an understanding of the atomic bomb. This man [Hutchins] and some of his associates on this commission . . . are terrorized by the things that they think a bomb like this can do to this world. . . . General Eisenhower [an earlier convention speaker] said that democracy is entering its quarter century of greatest test, and that if our country needs education and understanding of these subjects, it is up to the newspapers. Whether or not he got the message over to you in this report, that is exactly what these fellows have in their minds.

Finnegan added that criticism of press performance could be traced to the founding of the nation and, since the society had admitted that the press could be improved, "let's improve it."[111]

The substitute motion calling for creation of a committee to appraise the report was defeated. No vote tally was recorded. The original motion, as amended, passed 37-35. How the negative vote was split between those who wanted a positive resolution seeking reform and those who wanted no recognition of the commission at all is not known.

The ANPA also met during April, 1947. Public reports of its meetings, however, show no further attention to the Hutchins Commission report.

Public Awareness of the Commission

The public knew little about in-house criticism of the commission report. The ASNE resolution was included in some general news stories about the group's convention, but it did not receive prominent display. The public had little access to journals such as *Editor & Publisher*. Consequently, the public was told about the commission largely through the columns of Walter Lippmann and Marquis Childs,[112] through local newspaper editorials and through book reviews and editorials in some of the leading magazines of the day.

Although it is not safe to assume that newspapers agree with the content of editorial columns just because the columns appear in print, it can be argued that the content of these columns was not deemed so threatening that they deserved to be killed. Among the newspapers relying solely on Lippmann and Childs for commentary were the Denver *Post*, edited by Palmer Hoyt, and the Kansas City *Star*, edited by H. J. Haskell. Lippmann, whom

George Seldes saw as moving to the right both politically and in his reaction to press responsibility,[113] saw the report as "an effort to elucidate the axioms, to define the principles, and to make out the field, for continuing serious criticism of the press." He added: "Serious, searching, and regular criticism of the press is the ultimate safeguard of its freedom. The lack of it deprives the press of the very principle of which the press is, in relationship to everything else, the chief exponent."[114] Marquis Childs, in agreeing with many of the commission's points, predicted that the volume would not be welcomed by "extremists of both the left and right." Such a reaction was sure, he said, because "it dares to criticize the press, radio and movies for their failures" and "it doesn't yell for government regulation." What the report suggests, "in thoughtful language, is more awareness and more criticism of the press by the public," Childs wrote, adding, "What it may come down to is self-restraint. Cheap sensation and, yes, false sensation, can be turned into easy money these days. But this is also an easy way to destroy one of the freedoms that have come out of centuries of struggle and strife."[115]

In moving away from comments by leading columnists and into editorials written by newspapers of the day, problems of analysis arise. Just as it was impossible for the commission to inspect all the newspapers of the day for inclusion in its report, so too is it virtually impossible to read all the newspapers of the day for editorial commentary. To narrow the selection, the papers headed by men generally recognized as leaders in the field, including presidents of the ASNE during this time period, were reviewed.[116] Although this may give an elitist picture of the reaction, it also reveals how the opinion leadership of the industry saw *A Free and Responsible Press*. It is also impossible to deal with the contention that most of "the professional media men simply devoted their columns to commenting on each other's comments about the report and . . . never got around to reading the report itself."[117] From the editorials cited below, it would seem that the report was read. It would also seem that repeating others' comments was almost nonexistent. If there was a sameness about the editorials, it would seem more reasonable to assume that the cause was a like set of values rather than the use of someone else's ideas about the commission as one's own.

The Chicago *Tribune* was highly vocal in its disapproval of the commission. Its disapproval had already spilled over into its news story on the report. In an editorial, the *Tribune* took the commission to task for its conclusions about what readers wanted in newspapers: "The professors would have done better if they had studied the readers of the newspaper itself. Some of the newspapers which do not get an Oscar from the professors are of the largest circulation. The TRIBUNE, a professionally condemned paper, is among these large circulation papers." The editorial contended that it was a newspaper's job to provide the type of news which interested its readers and that readers were "more interested in the races than in the United Nations, in Hollywood than in Moscow." The *Tribune*, under Colonel McCormick, would continue a sniping campaign against the commission for several years. In 1948, it printed an article which tried to tie almost all the commissioners into Communist-front organizations; and in 1950, the reporter who covered the commission for the *Tribune* expanded his critiques into a full-length book, *Prejudice and the Press.*[118]

The *Wall Street Journal*, an organ of the business community then edited by W. H. Grimes, also was highly critical of the commission. It saw the report as calling for the creation of a "propaganda agency" by the government to supply news, "the instrument of dictatorship." It also wondered why the commission "thought the Soviet constitution might be source material, although it admits that it did little or no 'elaborate' domestic research." Of the report's conclusion that freedom of the press was in danger, the newspaper asked: "And who knows the needs of society surely enough to render that judgment?"[119] A week or so later, the *Journal* was back with another critique, this time condemning the commission's linking the word "responsible" in the title of the report: " 'Responsibility' can mean something no different than censorship." Responsibility would mean that "anyone expressing a dissenting opinion or reporting facts on the basis of which . . . opinion might be formed is 'rocking the boat.' " Consequently, the paper reasoned that such reporting would lead to charges of irresponsibility and to curtailment of freedom.[120]

Support for the commission and its report came from most of the opinion leaders of the day. The New York *Times*, published by

Arthur Hays Sulzberger, said that although it could not believe that freedom of the press was in as much danger as the commission said it was, the paper commented: "We welcome the study made by the Commission. We applaud the title of its report, *A Free and Responsible Press*. Freedom and responsibility must always be linked together. The public has the power to deny support to those agencies which overlook that all important fact."[121]

The New York *Herald Tribune* acknowledged that "There is a substance in the thesis under the Commissioners' report which cannot be waved away." The report's thesis, said the newspaper, "is that to protect the freedom of the press . . . it is not enough for the big business of modern communications simply to wrap itself in the First Amendment. There is a responsibility accompanying the guaranteed freedoms." Added the traditionally Republican but internationalist newspaper: "One can challenge these findings in detail and in general; but one can scarcely challenge the basic principle that a social responsibility does attach to the freedoms of the press, or doubt that this responsibility is ofter neglected or flouted in the daily workings of the complex mass communications industry. . . ."[122] (Thus did the *Herald Tribune's* editorial page disagree with its assistant editor, Wilbur Forrest, quoted above.)

Philip Graham's Washington *Post* said it would not "attempt . . . a defense of the achievements of the American press in general nor any protestation of special virtue on the part of the *Post*. The need at the moment appears to be for a critical self-examination." Saying that the commission had presented a "number of recommendations which seem to us of merit," the *Post* singled out the suggestion for an agency to appraise the performance of the press as perhaps the most important. "We believe," it said, "that such an agency could exercise an immensely constructive influence." Self-discipline and responsibility were the answers to many press problems: "Unless there is such an acceptance of responsibility, the political freedom conferred upon the press is certain to be lost with an attendant loss to the freedom of society in general. Only a responsible press as well as a free one can serve, in short, as an effective means to the end of a free society."[123]

Erwin D. Canham would be elected ASNE president in 1948, and his *Christian Science Monitor* was a strong supporter of the principles presented by the Commission on Freedom of the Press. Agreeing with the basic premise that freedom of the press was in danger "from within as much as from without," the *Monitor* said that "today's newspapers are not perfect, make mistakes, fail to live up to their responsibilities." The commission was "not able to suggest vigorously impelling solutions," said the paper. "They have not come up with panaceas, which is to their credit. They rightly condemn governmental interventions. They correctly find that self-discipline and self-improvement are best." Terming the press council suggestion a "novel idea," the *Monitor* concluded: "We hope American newspapers will not bristle at all this exceptional advice from without. We hope American newspapers will augment it with self-criticism, and self improvement. For a free press is indispensable to progress and peace."[124]

Barry Bingham, president and editor of the Louisville *Courier-Journal*, long an advocate of press responsibility, used a signed book review as a vehicle for criticizing the document for not going far enough in its presentation. He wanted specific recommendations for reform, but he admitted that even if the commission's advice was "muddled and uncertain" the "press which has done a poor job of both criticizing and defending itself, would do well to listen to advice from disinterested outsiders."[125]

"The distinguished panel of thinkers who composed the Commission on Freedom of the Press finds much to complain about in the conduct of American newspapers," the Chicago *Daily News*, edited by former ASNE president John S. Knight, said in a signed editorial. "They are entitled to a respectful hearing for their report," the paper continued. "The fact that they will not get it in that sector of the press about which they were complaining will serve to bolster their complaints." Knight was unhappy about the absence of newsmen on the commission and thought the idea that newsmen emulate physicians and lawyers in codes of ethics was not worth much. "Nevertheless, the report should be welcomed for such impetus as it may provide toward the steady and continuing improvement of the cultural and moral level of the press."[126]

After a brief paragraph of commentary about other editorial responses to the commission report, the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*,

stronghold of the Pulitzer family, concluded, "Nothing in the report seems audacious enough to justify such harsh criticism. The commission . . . neither found nor recommended anything particularly new." The faults of the press were apparent to these editors and they saw the commission's goal as defining "the area of criticism for the public." The paper found the report a little too philosophical for this purpose and its recommendations for reform too lacking in specifics. The paper agreed that "self-criticism and self-regulation are necessary for the press," but it found such recommendations old and inconclusive: "The commission attempted a stern questioning of the communications industry. Why not a vigorous answer as well?"[127]

"No human institution is perfect," wrote Norman Chandler's Los Angeles *Times*, "and the press of the United States is far from it. For that reason, and for the additional reason that the press does not hesitate to criticize anything or anybody when it feels there is a need and hence cannot object to criticism of itself, the newspapers of the United States should welcome" the Hutchins report. The *Times* found some problems with *A Free and Responsible Press*: the lack of specific names of newspapers transgressing proper standards, the idea of a code of ethics which might turn into licensing, the failure to consider the problems in starting new newspapers such as newsprint shortages, and increased federal regulation. "On the whole, however, the committee has done a pretty good job; with a few newspapermen on it—there were none—it would have done a better one. So far as the criticisms are valid they will be taken to heart."[128]

"The commission's report can be criticized on more than a few grounds," editorialized the Washington *Evening Star*, published by past Associated Press president Frank Noyes and edited by future ASNE president B. M. McKelway. Among points open for criticism: overgeneralizations and unqualified assertions "such as the point that the press is inclined to shut the door on people seeking to express new or controversial minority ideas." But the paper added: "Despite these weaknesses, however, the report adds up to an intelligent and wholesome challenge for self-improvement where error, carelessness, prejudice, ignorance or irresponsibility can do enormous harm if allowed to go unchecked in the mass media that play a decisive role in shaping the minds and acts of

nations." Although the paper found some of the report's recommendations of doubtful value, it was impressed with the need for special educational projects and "its proposal for a sort of nongovernmental policing or gadfly agency deserves more than passing attention." The paper concluded that the report "does make clear that negligence and narrow vision can be fatal in the mass communication field and that no part of the field can afford to be smug or to stop striving constantly to better itself. The press as a whole can benefit from such prodding."[129]

For the reader of the quality/opinion magazines, the response was much the same. *Fortune* picked up Time Inc.'s option on commission publications and carried *A Free and Responsible Press* as a supplement to its April, 1947, issue. That same issue also contained a four-page editorial seen by many as Henry Luce's reaction to the report. The editorial termed the report "meaty," "important," "difficult," "exasperating," "overly condensed." It said the commission should have stated clearly that all the press did not fall into unfavorable categories because the broadness of its statements could lead to reader disbelief. It added:

> The Commissioners fear that society, being dependent on giant media of mass communication for news and guidance . . . might, if dissatisfied, someday . . . ask or permit the state to interfere with press freedom. A shocking conception. Yet if thirteen sober men envision that danger even as a remote possibility, the press would do well not to dismiss it without serious thought.[130]

Fortune, however, saw the report as a philosopher's look at journalism and not a journalist's, thus limiting its value.

Fortune's sister magazine, *Time*, in its story on the report, commented: "For the time and money, and the caliber of the men, it was a disappointing report."[131] Whether these views were those of Henry R. Luce is open to question. Some writers contend that Luce disavowed the commission and its recommendations; his biographer, however, says Luce told an interviewer, "The commission is, in fact, complaining about the worst sections of the press, and to them it administers some well-deserved rebukes."[132] This, coupled with Dr. Hutchins' statement that it was "inconceivable" that Luce "would disagree with the general conclusions of the report,"[133] leaves unanswered the question of the reaction of the report's main financial backer.

Louis M. Lyons, writing in *Atlantic Monthly*, said the commission "has tried the press and found it wanting in responsibility and adequacy to the public need. The judgment is severe and the gored press will not be without its glib spokesmen to explain it all away as an academic conclusion. But they will have a hard case to break."[134] While wanting a more forceful, more specific document, Kenneth Stewart wrote in *Saturday Review of Literature:*

> Above all, the inquiry's high auspices endow the indictments against the press with an authority they have never before commanded. As long as the complaints came from Upton Sinclair, Oswald Garrison Villard, Harold L. Ickes, George Seldes, and other inveterate critics, the proprietors of the press felt free to point scornfully at the source; cry crank, curmudgeon, or communist, and go on about their business as usual. Dare they be quite so cavalier with Mr. Hutchins and his colleagues?[135]

Press critic A. J. Liebling, writing for the *Nation*, found the report not quite strong enough for him, but added: "A chief service of the volume is that it makes criticism of the press respectable."[136]

Press Criticism Made Respectable

In the months and years immediately following the publication of *A Free and Responsible Press*, some efforts toward improving press performance were initiated. Even before the commission issued its summary report, The American Press Institute had been created. Announced in February, 1946, the institute had as its goal "the improvement of American newspapers by giving experienced newspapermen . . . [the chance] to study and discuss the techniques of their work and the social, economic and political problems of the day."[137]

In February, 1947, the first issue of *Nieman Reports* appeared. Published by the Society of Nieman Fellows, the quarterly was the nation's first "journalism review."[138] In June, "CBS Views the Press," a pioneering effort at intermedia criticism, took to the airwaves in New York City.[139] In July, 1947, the National Council of Editorial Writers was formed "to stimulate the conscience and quality of the American editorial page."[140] And in October, 1947, the Associated Press Managing Editors presented the first written critique of the AP's service. A prelude to its Red Book which began appearing in 1948, this initial commentary asked for more interpretation and backgrounding of the news, more specialization

among reporters and better writing.[141] Near year's end came a book of press criticism written before the appearance of the commission report by the Nieman Fellows. To Louis Lyons, *Your Newspaper* presented "a blueprint for a better newspaper, while the commission, being philosophers, stuck to principles." Using case studies and examples, the Nieman Fellows reached similar conclusions as those of the Commission; that "curtailing the freedom of the press seems a poor way to protect it."[142]

In late 1947, Dr. Hutchins appeared before the 31st convention of the American Association of Teachers of Journalism and the 27th convention of the American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism. He defended the validity of the study in spite of the absence of newspapermen on the panel: "Though the press regards itself as competent to criticize everybody, it also holds that nobody is competent to criticize it. Since the press will not criticize itself, it must remain uncriticized. And uncriticized power is a menace to a democratic society."[143] Although the journalism educators did not receive his ideas warmly, they at least gave him a hearing—which is more than the ASNE had done.

The ASNE, however, continued the discussion in a new tone. In a front-page essay in the January 1, 1948, issue of the ASNE *Bulletin*, John Crider, editor-in-chief of the Boston *Herald*, warned his colleagues, "The quality of attacks should have little to do with our reactions. We should be neither mad nor smug. We should act constructively. . . ." Warning that other institutions under attack had neglected to respond constructively and wound up under government regulation, Crider told his colleagues that it could be suicidal "to laugh off our critics."[144] Later that same month, at an American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism meeting, Paul Lazarsfeld of Columbia University's Bureau of Applied Social Research suggested the creation of fact-finding boards to collect critical information about mass communication to provide a factual base so that problems "may be considered without emotional connotations."[145]

By 1949, *Editor & Publisher* was sponsoring a panel discussion which resulted in tentative proposals for a "joint appraisal of self-improvement possibilities of American newspapers through studies of specific problems."[146] Panel members were Erwin D. Canham, editor of the *Christian Science Monitor* and president of

ASNE; Barry Bingham, president and editor of the Louisville *Courier-Journal*; Gideon Seymour, executive editor of the Minneapolis *Star* and *Tribune*; Philip Graham, president and publisher of the Washington *Post*; Turner Catledge, assistant managing editor of the New York *Times*; Robert U. Brown, editor of *Editor & Publisher*, and four members of the Hutchins Commission or its staff: William E. Hocking, Reinhold Niebuhr, George N. Shuster and Kurt Riezler. Dr. Hutchins was to have participated but was ill at the time. Brown, the convenor of the panel, told the group: "I believe that in the last ten years, and notably since the end of the war, there has been an increasing awareness on the part of newspaper publishers of their responsibilities to the public."[147] He received no argument on this contention—even from commission members. The panel came up with several areas for study: coverage, newspaper policy formulation, policies on retractions and corrections, reporting of minority groups, analysis of the pressures placed on the press and so forth. The list bore a close resemblance to problems listed by the Hutchins Commission. And newspaper representatives on the *E&P* panel found the former commissioners remarkably well informed on the press.

Later in 1949, the American Society of Newspaper Editors, in convention, set up a committee to discuss the need for self-examination and criticism among newspapers.[148] J. Donald Ferguson, editor of the Milwaukee *Journal*, was chairman of the committee, which included Herbert Brucker of the Hartford *Courant*, Canham, Richard J. Finnegan of the Chicago *Sun Times*, Louis B. Seltzer of the Cleveland *Press* and Gideon Seymour of the Minneapolis *Star* and *Tribune*. By mid-1949, the ASNE had sent a team of investigators into Illinois to check on reports that some 50 newsmen had been on the payrolls of the state of Illinois between 1941 and 1949. In the words of the ASNE *Bulletin*, such an investigation was "unprecedented."[149] And by 1950, the ASNE special committee reported that it was time that "our continuing self-examination be made more specific and responsible to pr sent and prospective conditions."[150] In adopting the committee's report, a permanent body was established to monitor press responsibility.

Conclusions

WHEN EVENTS preceding the formation of the Commission on Freedom of the Press are juxtaposed with the editorial response to *A Free and Responsible Press* and steps taken by the media to improve performance, it would seem that the commission did have a positive impact on the newspaper industry of the day. Robert M. Hutchins himself denied this. In a speech before the 1955 ASNE convention, Hutchins derided the organization for its response to the report and labeled efforts by the editors toward achieving greater press responsibility as mere public relations gimmickry.[151]

Given that response from the man who headed the commission, it would seem appropriate to ask some precise questions about the response of the press to the commission's recommendations. Had the press adopted, by 1955, specific commission recommendations (such as the press council idea)? No. Were the efforts underway to improve press performance mere window dressing: The answer would have to be a qualified no.

"Responsibility" is capable of a variety of definitions: the meaning varies according to who is talking, when, and according to whom the press is supposed to be responsible to. To some, "responsibility" was a meaningless cliché; to others a goal worth striving toward. Whether it was motivated by a desire to protect proprietary interests from further governmental encroachment or a desire to improve the newspaper is an unanswerable question. But for a significant number of editors—Canham, McKelway, Brucker, Bingham, Ashmore, Seymour and others—*A Free and Responsible Press* provided a philosophical framework for reform. Using the groundwork which had been made ready by events of the previous fifteen years, these men planted seeds of a new role for the press. The older press lords were passing from the scene. Perhaps the new leaders, tried and tempered in Depression and war, more readily understood the public's demand for a responsi-

ble press. The industry would move slowly toward more specific responses, such as national and local press councils, but the move had to begin somewhere and the bases for the effort had to be broad enough, and general enough, to draw adherents from many segments of the industry. With the "responsibility" thesis, the Hutchins Commission provided the goals for future aspirations. Not only did the commission make press criticism socially acceptable, it arrived on the scene at a most auspicious moment: it was an idea whose time had come.

NOTES

1. Curtis D. MacDougall, *The Press and Its Problems* (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Company, 1964), p. 501.

2. William L. Rivers and Wilbur Schramm, *Responsibility in Mass Communications* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), p. 47.

3. John Hohenberg, *Free Press, Free People* (New York: The Free Press, 1971), pp. 277-8.

4. *American Journalism*, rev. ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1950), p. 797.

5. Fred S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm, *Four Theories of the Press* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1956), p. 85.

6. "Research on Freedom," *Editor & Publisher*, March 4, 1944, p. 32.

7. *Near v. Minnesota*, 283 U.S. 697 (1931).

8. J. Edward Gerald, *The Press and the Constitution 1931-1947* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1948; reprint ed., Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1968), passim.

9. Alfred McClung Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America* (New York: Macmillan, 1937), pp. 247-9.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 249.

11. Edwin Emery, *The Press and America*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall Inc., 1972, p. 687.

12. 301 U.S. 103 (1937) at 132.

13. George Seldes, *Lords of the Press* (New York: Julian Messner, 1938), p. 62. The antagonism apparently stemmed from Hugo Black's part in the 1936 Senate investigation of the Liberty League, an organization of conservatives designed to frustrate the New Deal, which McCormick backed financially.

14. "The American Newspaper," *Collier's*, April 11, 1911, p. 18.

15. *Ibid.*, 29 July 1911, p. 15.

16. Walter Lippmann, *Liberty and the Press* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and House, 1920), p. 47.

17. Ferdinand Lundberg, *America's 60 Families* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1935), p. 286.

18. *Op. cit.*, p. 3.

19. Harold L. Ickes, *America's House of Lords* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1939), p. 161.

20. Oswald Garrison Villard, *The Disappearing Daily* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1944), p. 5.

21. "Minton Attacks U.S. Press as 'Big Business'," *Editor & Publisher*, August 20, 1938, p. 8.

22. *Op. cit.*, p. 8.

23. Sixty percent of the press endorsed Landon; Roosevelt received 60.7 percent of the vote.

24. *Grosjean v. American Press Co.*, 297 U.S. 233 (1936).

25. *Lovell v. Griffin*, 303 U.S. 444 (1938); *Schneider v. New Jersey*, 303 U.S. 147 (1939); *Jones v. Opelika*, 319 U.S. 103 (1943).

26. *Bridges v. California*, 314 U.S. 252 (1941).

27. W. A. Swanberg, *Luce and His Empire* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972; reprint ed., New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1973), p. 302.

28. "$1,000 Prize Contest: Freedom of the Press," *Atlantic Monthly*, February 1944, p. 34.

29. "Commission to Make 2-Year Study of All Phases of Press Freedom," New York *Times*, February 29, 1944, p. 11.

30. "Freedom in Our Time," *Time*, March 6, 1944, p. 47.

31. *Problems of Journalism*, Proceedings of the American Society of Newspaper Editors (New York: American Society of Newspaper Editors, 1930), p. 134.

32. "The Structure and Function of Communication in Society," in Lyman Bryson, ed., *The Communication of Ideas* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), p. 37; reprinted in Wilbur Schramm, *Mass Communications* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1960), p. 117.

33. "Statement before Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subject to his Nomination as Assistant Secretary of State," *The Department of State Bulletin*, December 10, 1944, p. 692.

34. Philip Schuyler, "Press Freedom Probers Provocative Pundits," *Editor & Publisher*, April 1, 1944, p. 54.

35. The staff was rounded out by Llewellyn White, assistant director, Ruth A. Inglis and Milton Stewart. Available to provide expert advice on international communication were: John Grierson, former general manager of the Wartime Information Board of Canada; Hu Shih, former Chinese Ambassador to the United States; Jacques Maritain, president, Free French School for Advanced Studies; and Kurt Riezler, professor of philosophy, New School for Social Research.

36. "Freedom in Our Time," *Time*, March 6, 1944, p. 47.

37. Philip Schuyler, "Group Studying Press Freedom Meets," *Editor & Publisher*, March 25, 1944, p. 13.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

39. "Press Freedom Probers," pp. 16, 54-55.

40. *Editor & Publisher*, April 15, 1944, pp. 9, 60.

41. "For a Free Press," *Atlantic Monthly*, July 1944, pp. 40, 41, 44.

42. "Preaching the Line," June 24, 1944, p. 38.

43. "There Is Time Yet," *Atlantic Monthly*, September 1944, pp. 62, 64.

44. "VanderVeer Sees Weakness in Article by Lasch; Canham Calls It Able Criticism," *The Bulletin* of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, April 1, 1944, p. 5.

45. "Public's View of Press Seen as Post-War Challenge," *Editor & Publisher*, September 16, 1944, p. 6.

46. "Lawrence Reports 1st Amendment Vanishing," *Editor & Publisher*, April 29, 1944, p. 6.

47. "2 Civil Liberties Champions Clash on Press Freedom," *Editor & Publisher*, December 9, 1944, p. 58.

48. "It's Not a Glass House Affair," *Editor & Publisher*, December 9, 1944, p. 58.

49. "Glass House," *Editor & Publisher*, December 9, 1944, p. 38.

50. "Dr. Leigh Says 'No,' " *Editor & Publisher*, December 16, 1944, p. 38.

51. "Concentration and Absenteeism in Daily Newspaper Ownership," *Journalism Quarterly*, 22:97-114 (June 1945).

52. *Associated Press et al.* v. *United States*, 326 U.S. 1 (1945) at 20.

53. Robert U. Brown, "ASNE Reports Progress on Free Press Pledges," *Editor & Publisher*, June 16, 1945, p. 5. Other members of the trio were Ralph McGill, editor of the Atlanta *Constitution*, and Carl Ackerman, dean of the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism.

54. *Oklahoma Press Publishing Co.* v. *Walling*, 327 U.S. 186 (1946); *Mabee* v. *White Plains Publishing Co.*, 327 U.S. 178 (1946)

55. *Pennekamp* v. *Florida*, 328 U.S. 331 (1946); *Hannegan* v. *Esquire*, 327 U.S. 146 (1946).

56. "Senate Report Shows Trend Toward Monopoly in the Newspaper Industry," *The Guild Reporter*, July 25, 1946, p. 3.

57. "Royal Commission to Probe British Press Growth on Chains, Dangers of Monopoly," *The Guild Reporter*, November 8, 1946, p. 8.

58. Morris L. Ernst, *The First Freedom* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1946), pp. xii, 249-260, 50.

59. "Press Freedom Commission Bars U.S. News Handling," *Editor & Publisher*, February 2, 1946, p. 5 The Commission ultimately published five special studies: *Freedom of the Press: A Framework of Principle* by William E. Hocking, *Peoples Speaking to Peoples* by Llewellyn White and Robert D. Leigh, *Freedom of the Movies* by Ruth A. Inglis, *The American Radio* by Llewellyn White and two volumes of *Government and Mass Communication* by Zechariah Chafee Jr. A planned sixth volume on press coverage of the San Francisco Conference on United Nations Organization was not published.

60. "Leigh Reports Britannica Aid to Commission," *Editor & Publisher*, April 6, 1946, p. 8.

61. "Press Associations Chiefs' Comment," *Editor & Publisher*, March 30, 1946, p. 7.

62. U.S., Congress, Senate, Special Committee to Study Problems of American Small Business, *Survival of a Free, Competitive Press*, S. Committee Print 17, 80th Cong., 1st sess., 1947, pp. 1-4.

63. Commission on Freedom of the Press, *A Free and Responsible Press* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), pp. 1, 2, 9.

64. *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 21, 23, 26, 27, 28.

65. *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54, 55.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

67. *Ibid.*, pp. 83-90.

68. *Ibid.*, pp. 90-96.

69. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-107.

70. *Ibid.*, pp. viii, v, vi.

71. "Commission Asserts Press Menaces Itself," *Editor & Publisher*, February 1, 1947, p. 62.

72. In an analysis of press treatment of the commission report, Louis M. Lyons, curator of the Nieman Foundation, said that "nowhere in the metropolitan press was it front-page news. . . ." (See "The Press and Its Critics," *Atlantic Monthly*, July 1947, pp. 115-16.) The Milwaukee *Journal* and Chicago *Daily News* treatments would seem to counter that claim.

73. March 27, 1947, p. 36B.

74. "The Hutchins Report: A twenty-year view," *Columbia Journalism Review*, Summer 1967, pp. 5-6.

75. "Study on Free Press Delivered to Truman," Louisville *Times*, March 26, 1947, p. 13.

76. Andie L. Knutson, "The Commission Versus the Press," *Public Opinion Quarterly* ,12:129-35 (Spring 1948). The article was based on an unpublished compilation of press commentary on the commission's summary report made at the University of Chicago.

77. "The Press Is Indicted," *Editor & Publisher*, March 29, 1947, p. 38.

78. William E. Ames, "The Hutchins Commission Revisited," paper presented at the 1967 Association for Education in Journalism Convention, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, August 30, 1967. (Mimeographed.)

79. "The Hutchins Report: A twenty-year view," p. 5.

80. In adhering to its policy of confidentiality, no transcript of the commission's meetings was released. Clues to the course of deliberations may be found in Chafee's volumes through his use of anonymous quotes representing varying viewpoints of commission members and "informants" (as he called witnesses). From Chafee also comes the information that the commissioners met with a group of Nieman Fellows and conducted research among members of the New England Daily Newspaper Association. Hocking's book on philosophy contains signed/initialed footnotes which register commission member agreement or disagreement with some of his opinions.

81. "Seldes Hits and Runs After Talk to SDX," *Editor & Publisher*, April 26, 1947, p. 26.

82. "Editor Answers Critics on Monopolist Charge," *Editor & Publisher*, March 29, 1947, p. 57.

83. "The Movies Join the Press," *loc. cit.*, p. 9.

84. Dwight Bentel, "Journalism Educators Decry Lack of Facts," p. 12.

85. "Forrest Says Report Helps Destroy Prestige of Press," pp. 11, 59.

86. "The press Is Indicted," p. 38. The idea that newspapers should consider themselves common carriers of information had been discussed before; however it surfaced officially in the lower court decision in the Associated Press antitrust suit. Judge Learned Hand's decision stressed the need for a "multitude of tongues" in the newspaper industry and hinted that if the industry did not take action to provide "full illumination" of events voluntarily, then perhaps the courts had a responsibility to enforce such access. Ever since that ruling in 1943, the press had shied away from words

like "common carrier." Common carrier, at least to some, was equated with public utility and public utility meant governmental regulation. See *United States* v. *Associated Press et al.*, 52 F. Supp. 362 (S.D.N.Y. 1943); and Elisha Hanson, "Says AP Ruling Will Lead to Regulation of the Press," *Editor & Publisher*, November 13, 1943, p. 8.

87. "Commission Report," *Editor & Publisher*, April 5, 1947, p. 38.

88. *Ibid.*, p. 13. The June 1947 issue of *Fortune* and the July 1947 issue of *Nieman Reports* carried compilations of reactions to the commission report. These are not included in this text because many of the statements are difficult to understand without their full context and that context was not given. Taken at face value, however, the sampling reported in both periodicals would show opinion running slightly in favor of at least the general thesis of the report, if not in every particular. See "Free-for-all: Freedom of the Press," *Fortune*, June 1947, pp. 24-40; and Louis M. Lyons, "Press Reaction to free Press Report," *Nieman Reports*, July 1947, pp. 14-20.

89. "Of a Free and Responsible Press," *Journalism Quarterly*, 24:188, 192 (June 1947).

90. Professional periodicals examined in this study were found in three ways: through examination of *Ulrich's Periodicals Directory* and *The Writer's Market* for 1947 and through tracing contemporary journals back in time to see if they had been published in 1947. Through these sources, it was possible to find journals representative of the variety of interests found within the newspaper industry.

91. "How Do You Like Criticism?" *Publishers Auxiliary*, April 5, 1947.

92. "Advertising as a Danger to Freedom of the Press," *Printers Ink*, March 28, 1947, p. 120.

93. "A Clear Course for Press Freedom: More Effective Self-Regulation," *Advertising Age*, March 31, 1947, p. 12.

94. "But You Can't Flunk the Reader," *Quill*, May 1947, p. 3.

95. "Press Threatens Freedom of the Press—Special Commission Urges Changes," *The Guild Reporter*, March 28, 1947, pp. 2, 3.

96. Louis M. Lyons, "A Free and Responsible Press," *Nieman Reports*, April 1947, pp. 1, 2.

97. "Part of the Press," *The American Press*, May 1947, p. 24.

98. "Mr. White's Paper: Sequel to a Sequel," *Broadcasting-Telecasting*, March 31, 1947, p. 16.

99. NBC, *University of Chicago Round Table*, April 6, 1947, "A Free and Responsible Press," p. 3.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

102. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

103. *Problems of Journalism*, Proceedings of the American Society of Newspaper Editors (New York: American Society of Newspaper Editors, 1947), p. 19. The incident referred to involved owners of the Denver *Post* who allegedly extorted money from those involved in the Teapot Dome scandal, the money being used to buy the silence of the newspaper. Although

the men were members of the ASNE, no action was taken against them for this activity; the reason given was that the incident occurred before the Canons of Journalism had been adopted and any sanction levied under them would have been seen as *ex post facto* punishment. Forrest pointed out the two men concerned did resign from the society shortly thereafter.

104. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

105. *Ibid.*, p. 214.

106. *Ibid.*, p. 220.

107. P. 222.

108. P. 223.

109. Pp. 224-5.

110. P. 226.

111. Pp. 227, 228.

112. In analyzing press reaction to *A Free and Responsible Press* for *Nieman Reports*, Louis M. Lyons reported that "most papers left the responsibility for dealing with it to the few columnists who discussed it, chiefly Walter Lippmann and Marquis Childs." See "Press Reaction to Free Press Report," *Nieman Reports*, July 1947, p. 14. Nothing found in the researching of this paper would contradict that statement.

113. Seldes, pp. 343-47; Ickes, pp. 110-12.

114. Walter Lippmann, "A Useful Criticism of the Press," Kansas City *Star*, March 28, 1947, p. 24.

115. Marquis Childs, "An Eye on the Press," Denver *Post*, March 28, 1947, p. 10.

116. In addition to using newspapers edited by ASNE presidents as sources for editorial commentary, other newspapers examined were chosen from a list of papers and editors seen as leaders during this time period by journalism historian Edwin Emery. See Emery, *The Press and America*, pp. 653-73.

117. Ames, p. 2.

118. "The Professors and the Press," Chicago *Sunday Tribune*, April 27, 1947, p. 22F; Frank Hughes, "Name Angels of Moves to Curb Press," Chicago *Sunday Tribune*, November 14, 1948, p. 1; Frank Hughes, *Prejudice and the Press* (New York: The Devin-Adair Co., 1950).

119. "Professors and Freedom," *Wall Street Journal*, March 28, 1947, p. 4.

120. "Free Means Free," *Wall Street Journal*, April 7, 1947, p. 6.

121. "Freedom and the Press," New York *Times*, April 1, 1947, p. 26.

122. "A Free and Responsible Press," New York *Herald Tribune*, March 28, 1947, p. 24.

123. "Press Responsibility," Washington *Post*, March 30, 1947, p. 4B.

124. "A Free, Responsible Press," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 27, 1947, p. 24.

125. "Report on the Press Sound in Some Respects, Disappointing in Others," Louisville *Courier-Journal*, March 28, 1947, p. 6.

126. "Faults of the Press," Chicago *Daily News*, March 31, 1947, p. 10.

127. "The Press Debates Itself," St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, April 1, 1947, p. 2C.

128. "The Press and Criticism," Los Angeles *Times*, April 13, 1947, Part II, p. 4.

129. "Challenge to the Press," Washington *Evening Star*, March 30, 1947, p. 4C.

130. "Dangers to Press Freedom," *Fortune*, April 1947, pp. 2, 3.

131. "Let Freedom Ring True," *Time*, March 13, 1947, p. 68.

132. Swanberg, pp. 370-71.

133. *Ibid.*, p. 370.

134. Review in *Atlantic Monthly*, April 1947, p. 148.

135. Kenneth Stewart, Review in *Saturday Review of Literature*, April 5, 1947, p. 14.

136. A. J. Liebling, Review in *The Nation*, April 12, 1947, p. 427.

137. "Press Institute Formed for Working Newsmen," *Editor & Publisher*, February 16, 1946, p. 5.

138. "Nieman Fellow Blames Readers for 'Bad' Press," *Editor & Publisher*, March 8, 1947, p. 30.

139. "CBS Station in N.Y. Starts Criticism of the Press," *Editor & Publisher*, June 7, 1947, p. 11.

140. "Editorial Writers' Conference Organized," *Editor & Publisher*, July 12, 1947, p. 13.

141. "Editors Diagnose AP Reports, Service," *Editor & Publisher*, October 25, 1947, pp. 13, 190.

142. Leon Svirsky, ed., *Your Newspaper* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1947), p. xii.

143. Robert M. Hutchins quoted in Harry S. Ashmore, "The Hutchins Commission Revisited," paper presented at the 1967 Association for Education in Journalism Convention, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, August 30, 1967, p. 6. (Mimeographed.)

144. John H. Crider, "Editors Should Be Neither Mad nor Smug in Face of Rising Chorus of Criticism," *The Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors*, January 1, 1948, p. 1.

145. Dwight Bentel, "Fact Finding Boards on Press Advocated," *Editor & Publisher*, January 10, 1948, p. 58.

146. "E&P Panel Suggests Studies for Press Self Improvement," *Editor & Publisher*, March 26, 1949, p. 5.

147. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

148. *Problems of Journalism*, Proceedings of the American Society of Newspaper Editors (New York: American Society of Newspaper Editors, 1949), p. 22.

149. "Report to Membership on Illinois Scandal," *The Bulletin* of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, August 1, 1949, pp. 1-4.

150. *Problems of Journalism*, Proceedings of the American Society of Newspaper Editors (New York: American Society of Newspaper Editors, 1950), pp. 67-9.